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ABSTRACT

This manual is intended to help citizen groups set up their own on-the-job training activities, tailored to their own individual needs, issues, learning styles, and experiences. Specifically, it discusses the first steps in group development for members of citizen boards, councils, and grass roots organizations and offers suggestions for improving the way a group functions. The manual begins with a discussion about groups and what unifies them. The text then is divided into eleven sections, beginning with basics such as how to be a facilitator and getting to know the people in a group. Other topics discussed include communicating between group members, observing a group, diagnosing needs, and improving effectiveness. All exercises in the manual appear on single pages so they can be duplicated easily. (Author/LD)

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WORKING TOGETHER:

A Manual for Helping Groups Work More Effectively

by Bob Biagi
of the Citizen Involvement Training
Project (CITP)

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EA 012 013

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The contents of this manual are the sole responsibility of the authors; endorsement of the content by the University of Massachusetts or sponsoring organizations should not be inferred.

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The Citizen Involvement Training Project

The Citizen Involvement Training Project (CITP) provides training workshops, materials, and consultations to citizen groups throughout Massachusetts. The staff of nine includes specialists in organizing, fund-raising, group process, planning methods, information gathering, social change and adult education, and offers bilingual training as well.

CITP services include workshops and consultation, a 1000 volume Citizen Involvement Library (available to individuals and citizen groups), staff-generated manuals (such as this) and a *Training of Trainers* workshop series intended to help citizen groups establish their own training components in their communities.

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About Citizen "Training"

The work "training" may bring to mind a lion trainer, or a sargeant drilling an army–the sort of learning where one person is in charge and the trainee is in a passive or submissive role. "On-the-job training" brings forth a different image–that of a worker learning new skills relevant to the job she is doing or about to begin. Citizen involvement training is, more precisely, on-the-job training.

Citizen involvement training consists of people learning how to identify and then acquire the skills they need as citizen group members. Ideally, it is "active learning," since people do not tend to learn to be more powerful by taking a passive role in the learning process. So the "curricula" for citizens who want to have a say in decision-making consist of role-plays and simulations, diagnostic interviews and checklists, small group discussions centered around specific issues, or perhaps a support group of sorts, to give the encouragement a group needs to go out and do something–consciously.

About the CITP Manual Series

Usually, when CITP conducts a workshop for a citizen group, the CITP staff members first sit down with the group to discuss the problem and needs. These initial sessions consist of probing questions which are aimed at helping the group identify root causes as well as immediate, readily apparent problems. Many groups come in feeling that they need help with fund-raising, only to find that the need for funds is a symptom of a deeper problem–perhaps poor planning or a weak decision-making structure.

After discussing the problems and needs, the CITP staff and representatives of the group or agency then sit down to design a workshop or workshop series to suit those needs.

This manual, as well as others in the series, is intended to help citizen groups set up their own on-the-job training activities tailored to their individual needs, issues, learning styles and experiences. In writing these manuals we have used what we have learned through our experiences with hundreds of citizen groups.

It is hoped that these manuals will be used to help orient new members to an organization, and will be an integral part of membership/staff development. Some organizations are reluctant to spend time on training activities, at least at first, before the merits have been proven. The reluctance is appropriate; training can be a diversion from the real concerns of the group. But training activities can emphasize the development of analytical capabilities and appropriate strategies.

If you are the one introducing training exercises to your group, you might first spend some time discussing these reluctancies or individual learning preferences. Then again, you may want to let the "proof of the pudding" rest in the tasting.

About this Manual

This manual was written to help meet a need which has been expressed by many groups with which CITP has worked.

It is a do-it-yourself manual that deals with the first steps in group development for members of citizen boards, councils and grass roots organizations. It is written for those members who would like to learn some basics in order to help improve the way in which their group functions. The manual includes a number of useful tools and exercises which are written in simple language so that anyone might follow the step-by-step instructions and share the information with others as well as adapt the information to specific needs.

The area of group process is an ever-expanding field. Hundreds of volumes of written and audio-visual materials have been concerned with the subject, which covers a very wide spectrum of ideas and perspectives. These perspectives range from management training for business and industry to human relations training for small groups. This manual attempts to take only a small part of that field and make it practical and available for citizen groups which have not had access to available materials or do not find the existing literature relevant to the peculiarities of a citizen group, or are simply not accustomed to using training.

In a sense, this manual is a "translation" of the existing group process literature into the plain language of experience for the average involved citizen.

The manual begins with a discussion about groups and what unifies them. The text then is divided into eleven sections, beginning with basics such as how to be a facilitator and getting to know the people in your group. It then moves to the more complex issue of communicating between members within a group. This is followed by section on observing your own groups, diagnosing needs and improving effectiveness. The last section includes a number of actual responses to various exercises which participants have given in CITP work-

shops. This section not only contains some useful ideas but can give the novice facilitator an idea of what to expect from participants in workshops.

It is not assumed that those who will use this manual have had experience as trainers, nor that those who participate in the exercises have had training before. For this reason anyone interested in facilitating a group process workshop might want to refer to the CITP manual entitled **Training of Trainers**, for a more indepth look at the role of a trainer or facilitator.

If you choose to facilitate any of these exercises, be prepared to do the following:

- Read the section on facilitating in section I.
- Familiarize members of your group with the manual.
- Decide with other members what the group training needs and interests are.
- Recruit members to attend workshops or hold them during regular meetings.
- Be prepared to introduce and explain exercises.

The amounts of time and numbers of participants listed in each exercise are minimums. While some exercises work better in large groups, small groups of approximately 5-7 people could allow for greater participation. The amount of time the group should spend on an exercise should be agreed upon by all before starting and should take into account the time practically available and the interest of the participants.

Robbie Gordon

Materials required for any of the activities mentioned in this manual are minimal. Basically all that is needed is newsprint or large sheets of paper, tape to put up the sheets, felt pens and copies of the exercise worksheets.

Almost any type of facility can be adapted as long as the room is large enough to break into small groups comfortably and the chairs can be moved.

What ever way you choose to use this manual, tailor it to suit your own needs and learning styles. All exercises in the manual appear on single pages so that you can duplicate them easily.

Special Note

It may appear to many that paper is being wasted by using large print and several spaces between the lines in this manual. The reason for this comes from my experience with elderly folks, people who have difficulty reading and a community organizer who is blind. They have all helped to raise my understanding of some of the difficulties encountered by folks when they have to deal with the written word. I hope that these materials will be easily read by you and your friends.

About the Exercises

Since this unit is intended to be useful to many types of groups at many different levels of development, introductory exercises are included; if they can help, use them. We are aware that most groups change membership slowly but constantly over a period of time—half of a group may be new during the course of a year. This is especially important for a dynamic group process, because it involves the constant interaction of new members and old. In addition, even those who are knowledgeable about group process often fall into periods of stagnation and indifference. The interests and skills of members change and develop over time and a simple exercise might keep people in tune with each other.

These exercises are designed to provide participants an opportunity to give feedback on how they see other members of the group, and are affected by them. And most importantly, the exercises can help people get feedback on how their own behavior affects others. This feedback is the basis for group as well as individual development. When group members both participate in exercises and observe them as well, the group expands its resources and becomes its own valuable reference for diagnosing and analyzing its own group process (and potential problems).

The design of this unit and the group experiences it includes are based on the belief that *experience* in the area of group process *comes before learning*. And learning that is experienced is not only more valuable but is retained longer and becomes a part of a person's way of acting and thinking. The time-tested way to train craftspeople and artisans (such as carpenters and masons) is to let them learn the trade by doing it.

For this reason, these exercises are intended to help people learn through actual experiences. This means that participants/members should not be left hanging in midair after an exercise. The exercises should be discussed (processed) to find out such things as: what happend and why; what are the results and implications; and how can they be used by everyone in the group?

The amount of learning this type of active participation can provide and the way it can help depend greatly on how committed the group members are to helping others in the group and, more importantly, how committed and open (ready) they are to helping themselves.

It is also important that you keep in mind that the most significant aspect of the learning experience is not the exercise itself but the processing which should immediately follow.

You should be sure that all the ideas that come from the exercises are talked through, examined and made meaningful so that they can fit the needs of the group. It's important that participants draw new information from the exercises and it may be helpful at the end of an exercise to have participants interview each other or break the group into sub-groups so that everyone can have a chance to talk about what they experienced.

Sometimes having one person or a group of people observe what's going on in an exercise and then having them discuss it for the rest of the group afterwards can be helpful (see the Fish Bowl Technique in this manual). You should pay special attention to discussing/processing the nonverbal exercises because many people do not respond well to this type of activity. While nonverbal techniques can be a very powerful learning experience, it is most important to allow plenty of time for the participants to talk through their learning. This point was brought out repeatedly in our workshops at CITF Most people wanted more time to discuss/process what they had done in exercises rather than moving on to new exercises. You should keep in mind the fact that it's better that a group experience one well-processed exercise than six which rely on the individuals to "go home and think about it."

These exercises are not intended to be done exactly the way they are presented in this unit. As you read through the material, see how you can adapt things to your specific group. Most of what is included in the unit has been adapted and translated from existing materials (see the bibliography) and from actual workshops tailored for specific groups.

Robbie Gordon

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* The bibliography covers only a small part of the field of group process. Refer to the bibliography and see the annotated bibliography by M. K. Tichy, *Behavioral Science Techniques* Praeger Publishers, New York, 1975. It's for health professionals but applicable anywhere. Another helpful book is Franklin, Jerome L., *Organization Development*, an annotated bibliography, Ann Arbor, Center For Research on Utilization of Scientific Knowledge, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 1973.

Introduction: The Group as an Extended Family—With All Its Problems and Promises

Speaking personally, the Citizen Involvement Training Project has had a tremendous affect upon my life and that of my family as well. I spend more time per week with my co-workers than I do with my wife and children. In the case of most volunteer members of boards and councils, the time taken—one or more nights a week—often comes at the expense of the family or other pursuits. For some reason we don't believe that working with a group should take as much effort as living with a spouse and children. Yet, it does. And, in fact, one affects the other greatly.

Citizen groups can and do play an important role in our lives as well as fulfilling a necessary and extremely important role in a democratic society. Many times the groups of which we are a part have a greater impact on us than we realize. They may influence our feelings, values, behavior and even the way we think.

To some people this is viewed negatively because it could block individualism and initiative and build conformity. In addition, groups are seen as using up a good deal of our valuable time. Yet, on the positive side, groups do fill personal needs such as security, recognition, and even responsibility and motivation. And, more importantly, groups can mobilize a wide range of resources to operate cooperatively in order to accomplish valuable common goals.

Many of the complex issues we are facing today require a wide range of experience and knowledge to deal with them effectively. This experience and knowledge, and even clout, can often be provided more effectively through a group effort than by individuals working alone and sometimes needlessly at odds with potential allies. Thus the question for us in this unit on group process is not *whether* there should be cooperative effort, but *how to utilize* more effectively the many boards, councils and other citizen groups which exist now or might develop in the near future.

I am convinced both by the research on group effectiveness and by the many years of collective experience at CITP that a group's success depends as much on its process—the way it does things internally—as its accomplishments.

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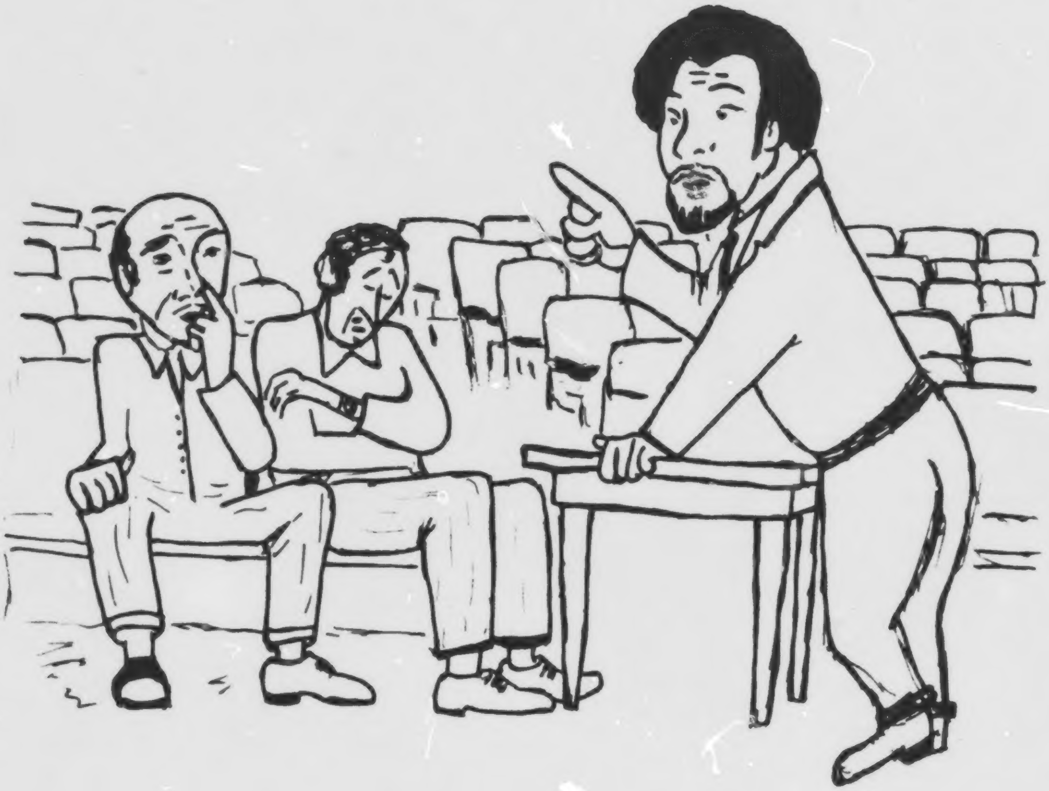


"A person convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

— Alexander Pope

Chapter I:

Membership vs. Leadership

When people feel they are "only members" of a group and not "leaders" both the individuals and the group as a whole suffer. Some individuals become frustrated because they are not given the opportunity to express themselves, while others who do not take responsibility become bored. This unit is written on the premise that all members of a group share responsibility for the group.

A classic example told by one workshop participant emphasizes the need for sharing responsibility. Their group was a very dynamic one made up entirely of volunteers who shared their many tasks. The group got a good deal accomplished, seldom missed meetings and enjoyed participating. Then the group secured a grant which brought on a full-time staff person. Within six months most of the responsibilities had been transferred to the staff person. Member interest dropped to such a low point that it was difficult to get enough people for a monthly meeting.

One point to be made is that sharing responsibility and not putting it all into the "leader's" hands makes a more dynamic, interested and productive group.

If your group believes that people should control the decisions which affect their lives, then group members should have control over the decisions their group makes. How can your group push for more citizen input externally when internally the group has set no precedents?

For too long people have been allowing their input to be blocked by the so-called "expert's." And yet, **every** member could become a "leader," eliminating the need for one or a few persons to control the direction and personality of a citizen group. Every member can take responsibility for the success, action and decisions of the group.

There was a time (and it still is so in many places) where the training of groups was called "leadership training," and leaders in groups and schools were selected for special attention, and shown "how to lead." That sort of focus encourages the control of everything in society by a few. While there is still a need for good leadership, there is greater need for the control of groups by their memberships. This will encourage many things, and most of all it will encourage members to buy into or become a real part of the group and support its decisions, for they will be decisions the members have made themselves. This is the **Process**, the group process which allows a group to accomplish its task or job and feel good about doing it.

This isn't easy, for there are many problems that accompany the change from leader-oriented to group-oriented membership. It's something that I've been through myself at CITP. Coming from more traditional citizen group orientation (for the past 20 years the groups I've been active in were democratic, but leader-oriented), I found the structure of CITP (which is non-hierarchical) new and challenging. I had always been fairly successful in these other groups and CITP took a good deal of de-programming and sweat. It seemed like too many cooks would spoil the feast at times, but as it turned out this has been the most successful group in my experience.

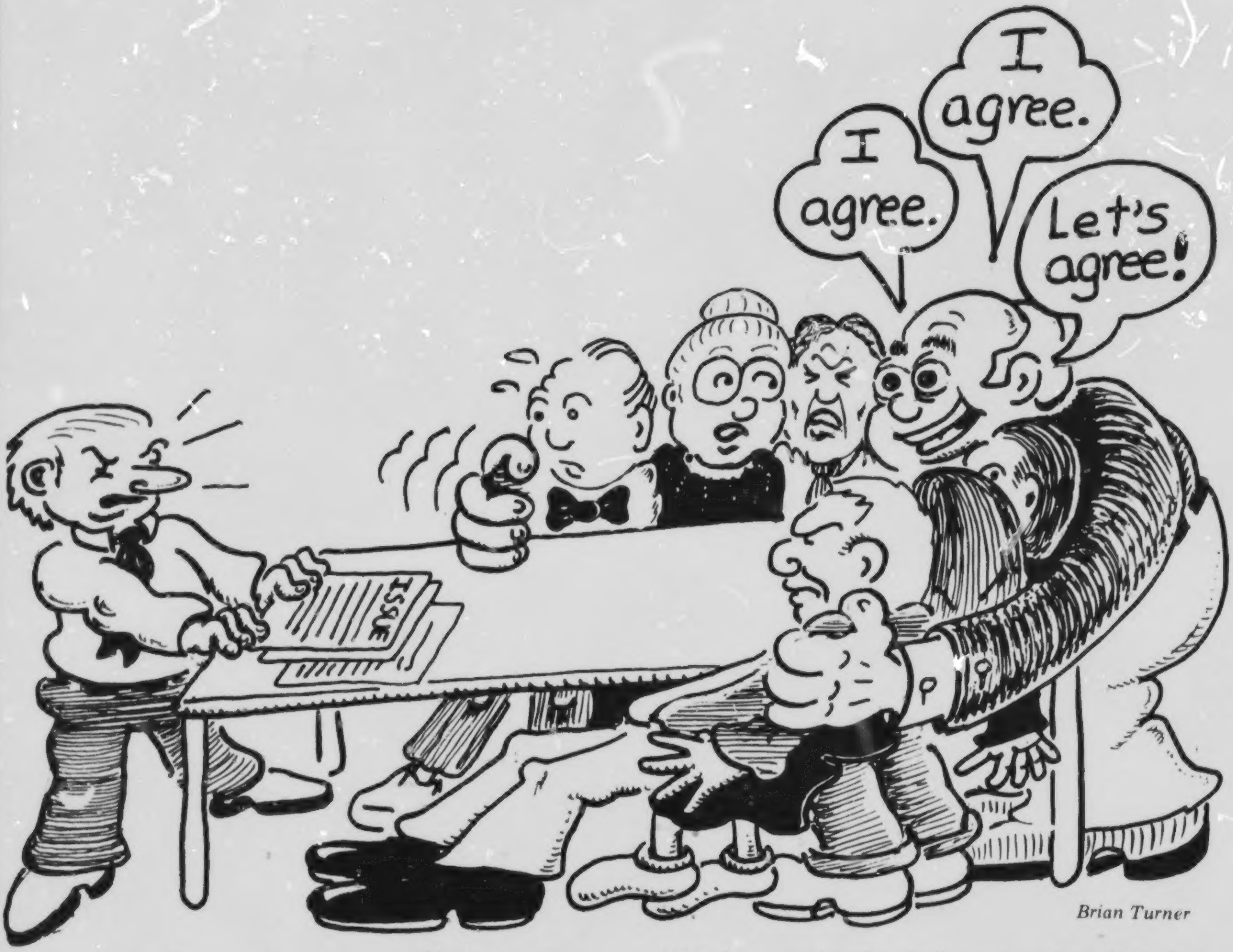
The Ideal/The Real

The ideal:

Your group wants to be a highly motivated and effective group which functions with a minimum of effort, and has well attended meetings that are satisfying and accomplish desired objectives, a super group, able to make hard decisions with a single vote, able to keep on track no matter whose interests are at stake.

The Real:

- Members need to know what's expected of them by the group and what they can contribute and how.
- Members need to know what limits the group has set—politically, socially, interpersonally.
- Members need to feel that they belong to the group and that others in the group not only welcome them, but also feel they are needed. They must feel that they are needed to reach the goals of the group, and are appreciated for their efforts.


ISSUE
I agree.
I agree.
Let's agree!

Brian Turner

- In order for people to work effectively, they must feel free to share in the process of goal setting and planning. They need to be a part of deciding what the group will do and why. This means that all members must be given a chance to speak and be listened to as well, so that everyone can have some input into the decisions.

- Members need to feel that what they are working towards can be done and will be meaningful to themselves as well as others when it's accomplished.

- Members need to know specifically what is expected of them, not just that they have to show up at a meeting every Monday night.

- Members need to have input into the setting of the rules which the group works under. Maybe 7:00 is too early for someone who has to make sure that they get their family taken care of first and then have to drive 15 or 20 miles over the mountain to get to the meeting.

- Members need to be challenged so they don't feel that their time would have been better spent elsewhere. Yet members need to be challenged in a positive way—encouraging them to take tasks they can accomplish and ones which help the group meet its goals.

- Members must be able to see and feel that they have made some sort of progress: that they are getting somewhere and it's worth all the effort they have made for it.

- Members also need to have faith, confidence, and trust in other members of the group. Some groups are set up with inherent distrust within the group: a landlord-tenants relations group. It is important, then, for members to be given opportunities to establish trust in a non-threatening, non-emergency situation.

- Members need to know when they have done a good job, as well as when they haven't. But, remember, criticisms should be positive.

Building and Blocking

One of the biggest factors in group cohesion, cooperation and shared decision-making is called "building and blocking." That is, the elements in the group which either builds your organization and keeps it dynamic or blocks your group from functioning well and developing.

At the outset of one of your group's meetings or during a "group process workshop," you might want to try the following in order to identify your group's "building and blocking" factors. Two long sheets of newsprint are taped together and put up on a wall. At the top of one is the word **BUILDING**, and at the top of the other is the word **BLOCKING**. Nearby are felt tip markers which all those present should be encouraged to use throughout the meeting or workshop. The task is to add things to each sheet as people become aware of them during the session.

Usually people wait for breaks to fill in ideas, so a sheet like the one that follows can be handed out so that people can keep notes for later. At the end of the session, participants can be given a few minutes to put ideas on the wall. The ideas are then discussed while someone records new ideas that pop up.

"Building and Blocking" is useful not only as a way to sum up the session but also as a tool to encourage thinking about and broadening the issues that have been raised. So be sure to give it enough time for it may be the part that will make the workshop a success. Remember that most times a group knows the cure for its own problems; they only need time to formulate and express the prescriptions. On the next page you will find a sample sheet that can be copied and handed out to participants.

Exercise:

Building and Blocking

Using your own experiences, list things which help to **BUILD** an organization, and things which **BLOCK** an organization from functioning well. Share these with others by putting them on the newsprint provided.

BUILDING	BLOCKING

Getting to Know You:

Introductions

Introductions help people get acquainted and set a more comfortable tone for the meeting. Some introductions give people a more personal glimpse into other members. This often helps build the trust necessary for efficient and enjoyable group functioning. Knowing the names of others and something personal about them is a great deal more important than many group leaders can imagine.

A simple exercise you can do in your group is one called "Personal Introductions." Going around the group, each person gives their name, and where they are from, and one other fact about themselves. A facilitator should suggest what the third piece of information might be. It's good to make that information something positive, like a recent accomplishment; in any case, try to make it something relevant to the meeting or workshop. There is always one talker in the crowd, so try to have the question be one with a short answer. In fact, it may be a good idea to limit the time to one minute for each person and let the rule bend if the group is really interested.

This exercise works best when there are a few or several new people in the group. The following exercises also work best with new members, however, if your group consists of people who have known each other for some time, see the third exercise, "Let's Get On With The Meeting."

Julie King/Pandora/cpf

Robbie Gordon

You're Right, There Are Limitations

In a large meeting, everyone can't be introduced to all the others without giving up a lot of precious time. Again, subgroups might help. When these techniques aren't used properly, they can introduce an air of false friendliness: "Now we will all get together and be friends, even if it hurts." Do a little thinking about this—you know your own group best.

Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Check out the group's willingness to participate in such exercises in advance so that people know what's coming and more importantly, how much time it will take to do an exercise. Always increase your estimates by at least 15% for two reasons: First, you probably didn't allot enough time and people will feel that they are wasting time they didn't agree to, and secondly, if by any chance, the group finishes early, everyone will feel better about it.

- Choose the sort of interview questions that suit the purpose of the meeting and the amount of trust people have for one another. Many topics may take longer than is possible, others may be too simplistic or personal.

- Be aware of the group: if they don't like the proposed questions, there is probably a good reason. By all means, get some input from them.

- For speeding up the process, keep people in large groups for both interviewing and introductions.

- If the information gotten from the members is to be used to set the agenda or make proposals, be sure that someone records what is being said. And if it's for the agenda, put it on newsprint.

Exercise:

Small Group Introductions

A quick, non-threatening method for introducing members and new members is to divide everyone into groups of two or three people who don't know each other well, and have each individual also ask a few questions of one another.

These become very useful techniques for new or changing boards and councils, where people are usually from a wide variety of backgrounds. By setting up triads of people who don't know each other and allowing a few extra minutes for each member to speak, you will be encouraging the formation of support groups.

If done with two people (diads), A interviews B and then B interviews A:

If done with three people (triads), A asks B, B asks C, and C asks A:

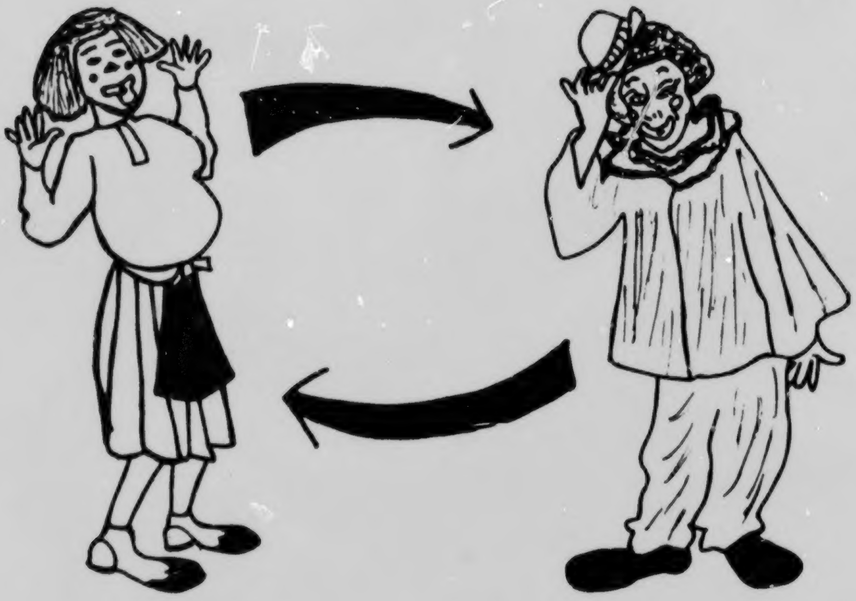
1. Each interviewer has two to five minutes each to ask the questions. These exercises should take about three minutes to set up and from five to 15 minutes to complete.

2. The questions asked in the "interviews" might begin with the person's name, phone number, outside interests, occupation, reasons for joining, or anything which might be relevant to your particular group. Other types of questions you might add include:

   - What do you like or dislike about this group?
   - What are your objectives for the group?
   - What do you like or dislike about the way you fulfill your role in this group?
   - Who are you/what are we?
   - What's your life been like? What's the group been like?

3. After the group is brought back together, each member introduces and describes the answers of the member they interviewed for the rest of the group.

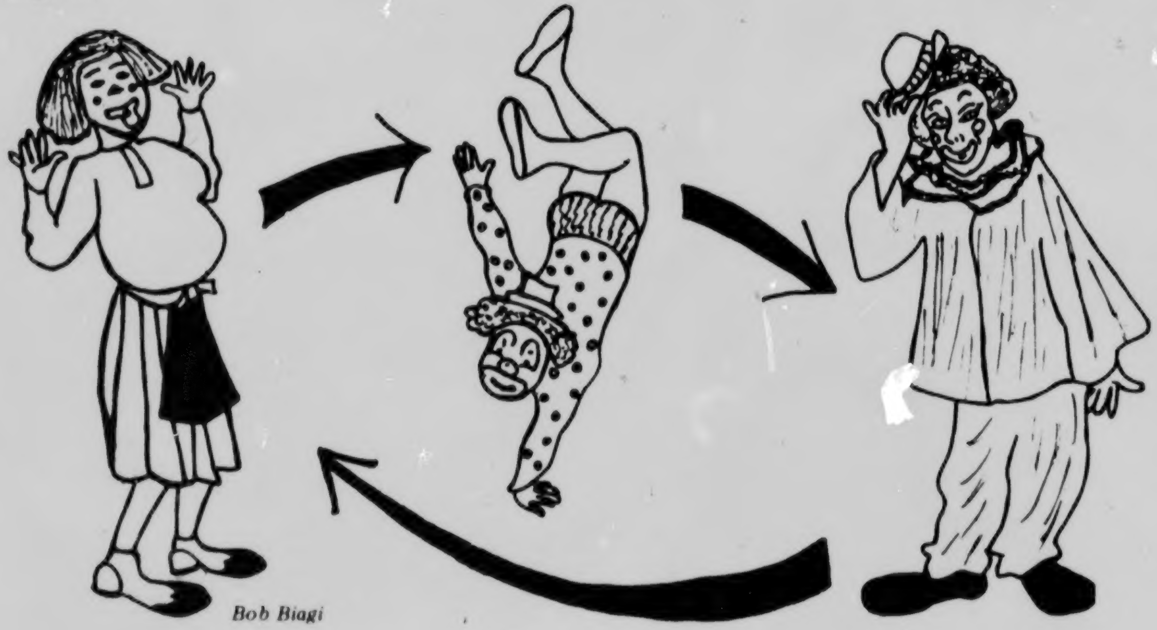
4. Have diad or triad members exchange phone numbers after they have "broken the ice" through these short conversation exercises—it could encourage these new groups to become communication and information networks in the future.



This sort of interviewing may also be done in clusters of three or more if the questions are narrow in scope. An alternative in a massive group is to use some of these techniques in sub-groups so that members will at least know those in their sub-group. If it's important for everyone to meet everyone else in that massive group, the sub-groups can be reshuffled for another five-minute go-around or reshuffled at each meeting until everyone gets a chance to be introduced to everyone else.

There are other variations and uses of this exercise such as one which is used to assess needs (see Needs Interest Exercise).

A fun variation of the introduction exercise which can liven up a group that knows each other quite well is to go through the diad-triad interviews, but then instead of A introducing B, A introduces herself as though she were B and B introduces himself as A, etc. This also helps people develop their listening skills.



Bob Biagi

Exercise:

The Cocktail Party

Still another variation of introductions which uses a great deal of nonverbal communication and can lead to an interesting discussion afterwards is an adaptation of the Pfieffer and Jones "Cocktail Party." This exercise allows participants another relatively non-threatening way to become acquainted quickly, without the use of words. In some groups it serves as an equalizer, because it puts the people who are usually talkers and those who are usually non-talkers on the same level. It is also one that you might want to try with people in a bilingual group, since it erases the language barrier. In that case, make sure the directions are given in both languages.

Materials:

- large sheets of newsprint for each participant which can be tied "sandwich board" style with a string around the neck
- a ball of string and something to cut it with
- felt tip marker pens

Setting: a large room so participants can move around freely

1. Everyone gets the materials and is given 10 minutes to do any of the following in order to introduce themselves to fellow members. The facilitator can choose one for everyone to follow, but it's more enjoyable if each person can choose which variation fits them. In fact they may be encouraged to dream up their own way.

- Draw a picture or pictures of yourself: a caricature, cartoon, etc.
- Draw a pie with different sized wedges to show the percentage of yourself that is devoted to the various activities in the group.
- Write a series of words that describe yourself, or write a one to two paragraph description of yourself.
- Do anything you'd like to describe yourself to others (using a sheet of paper).

2. The completed sheets are tied around each person's neck and hung in front of the person like a sign.

3. Now circulate around the room as though you were at a cocktail party and try to communicate with others without speaking.

4. Whoever is facilitating the exercise should keep people moving so that they spend about two minutes with each person, meeting at least six people.

5. After this nonverbal phase, everyone is free to go back and talk to whomever they would like. At this time you are encouraged to ask questions of people which you normally wouldn't ask. For example: *Why are you here? How's the family, garden, harvest? Do you fish, hunt, drink beer?*

An interesting variation for groups so inclined is to have a party—beverages, potato chips and all. A realistic setting often allows people to feel more relaxed.

Exercise:

Oh, We all Know Each Other—

Let's Get on with the Meeting

While everyone might feel that these instruction techniques are good to help strangers get a quick impression of everyone else, many feel that they have been around enough so that they don't need this sort of thing. Yet these techniques, with a little creative input, can awaken fresh interest among people who have worked together for a long time. This exercise can be a useful way to put together an agenda that will include everyone's issues. To do this have members divide into groups of twos or threes and ask a question like the following:

1. What's an important thing that should be discussed at this meeting which is not on the regular agenda?
2. What do you hope to get out of this meeting?
3. If I were the ____________________, the agenda would include
4. What's a question or issue that someone other than yourself would like to see on the agenda but is hesitant to suggest?

Another useful adaptation of these techniques is when a meeting is going poorly because of mistrust, competition, or any other reason. It also can help to speed up the process of setting up new committees or task forces when these are necessary. It can also be used when there is a meeting between two groups, especially when they have an unfriendly history.

Bob Biagi

Chapter II:
Facilitating

Bob Biagi

To those of you who read this book and think that you'd like to have your group go through some of these exercises, it may interest you to know that although it is often the case that the "leaders" of organizations are the ones trying to encourage better group communication, it is many times those leaders who are the cause of the problems themselves. Therefore it pays—especially in light of the contention that every member needs to take responsibility for leadership—for those people like yourself who may not be the so-called leader (and never want to be) to think about taking on the task of "facilitation." Facilitation is an extremely important role that everyone should get a chance to experience. Although the word has all the mystifying sound of jargon, it could be the answer to wider member involvement in many organizational activities. Although there may still be a chairperson (male or female) or designated "leader," that person does not conduct the meeting, the exercises, or workshops. They are the politicos who deal with things outside of meetings and workshops. The *facilitator* fulfills a very different role.

We call this person a facilitator to distinguish her from the typical leader or chairperson. A facilitator is more like a discussion leader—someone who facilitates discussions, decisions or action. Whereas a chairperson may make judgments, rulings, decide what procedures will be followed and even use parliamentary procedure to rule people out of order, the facilitator makes suggestions, proposes ideas, invites and encourages comments from everyone and consults with the group to generate a consensus rather than work toward a majority decision with which almost half of the group doesn't agree.

The job of you or any member when they are the facilitator—or even then they are not—is to make everyone know that they are included in what is going on, and that what they have to say is being listened to by the group. The role becomes one of a neutral or objective person.

It is important that the facilitator have little or no investment in the outcome of a decision; rather, she should be more invested in ensuring that everyone is a part of the outcome. Thus the role entails trying to provide enough structure to allow everyone to have freedom and feel good about how the job or task is being done, and still get that job done.

Bob Biagi

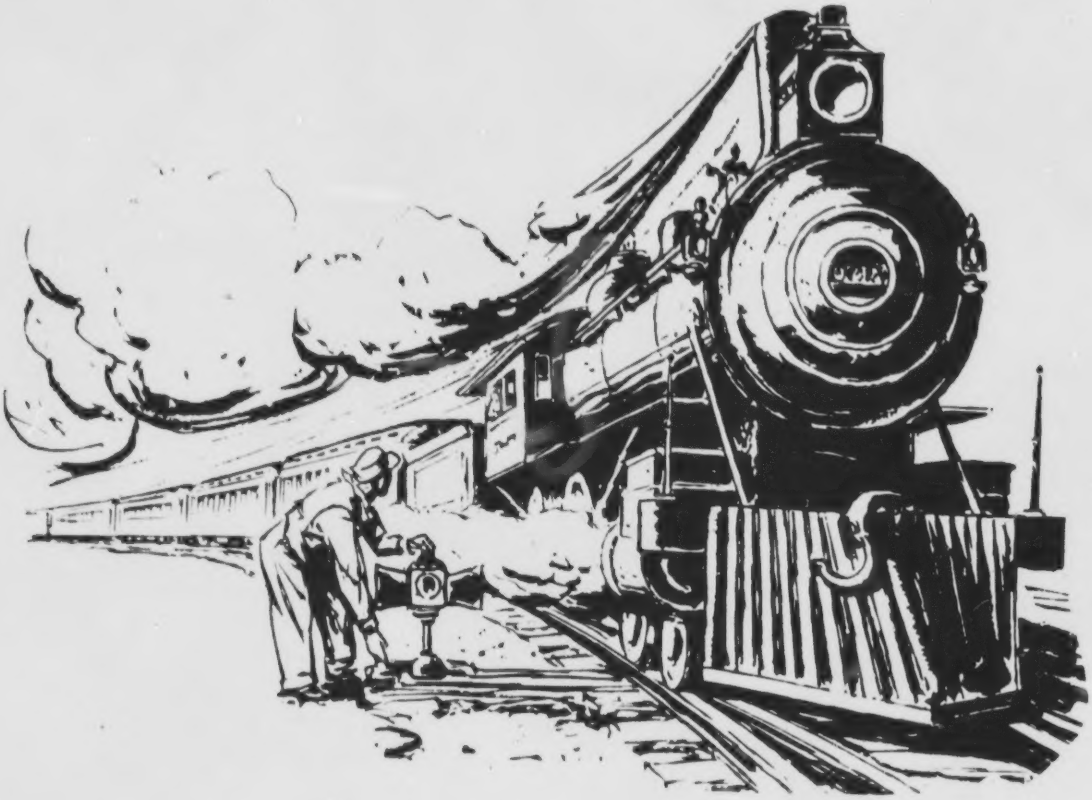
Cooperative group participation and facilitation may be a new approach for some or all members. If that is so, you'll want to take some time to clarify things for yourself and then share with the group what is expected of them. They must understand that you can't facilitate by yourself, but that successful meetings and workshop activities are the responsibility of all members. That means that they must be in on the planning so they know what they're going to do, why they're doing it, and their role. The activity becomes the joint responsibility of members and facilitators.

Rotating Facilitators

In many groups, and here at CITP, the role of facilitator is rotated so that there is a different facilitator for every meeting. We use an alphabetical list to set the order; then we just keep repeating the list when the last person has facilitated. This is a very helpful tool because it allows everyone a chance to experience the role of facilitator and helps us be more sensitive to others when they are facilitating (also helps each person be better members). This usually makes for a more democratically run meeting. It also helps members to be more constructively critical when needed. Many people resist being a facilitator because they don't know how. Hopefully the following exercise on facilitating will encourage members to give it a try.

(We at CITP also rotate recorders. Try it sometime—rotating both these positions can help members become aware of many of our hidden prejudices—how many meetings are facilitated by women when there are men in the group? And how many times have you seen a man recording minutes when there are women in the meeting?)

The following exercise includes a number of things which should help to clarify the role of facilitator for yourself and others in the group. It's important that everyone in the group becomes familiar with facilitation because it's a useful technique for everyone to use during meetings. Any group member can get the group back onto the right track again, work out differences, clarify and summarize what's happening and give feedback.



Exercise:

The Facilitator

1. Build into a regular agenda 20 minutes in the beginning and a half hour or more at the end to use the materials in a discussion.

2. Choose three willing people as facilitators (doing so beforehand would save time). Divide the agenda into three equal parts, one for each facilitator.

3. Pass out the Facilitator's Role Sheet to everyone. Explain what will happen and discuss each of the points on the Facilitator Role Sheets quickly.

4. Now pass out The Facilitator Observation Sheet to everyone but the facilitators and explain the instructions. (They are similar to the Fishbowl Observation later in this manual.)

5. Select a timekeeper and have each facilitator conduct the actual meeting for 5 minutes to a half hour.

6. When the meeting has one half hour or so left, stop the official meeting and use the observation sheet as a basis for discussion. (If discussion doesn't begin spontaneously have someone read through each of the points made on the role sheet and ask for similarities and differences between each facilitator. Unless members feel very threatened, responses will come quickly. This is a useful method to use to make one-person leadership aware of what should be done in a meeting.

Variation: In a large group have the facilitators and a few others sit in the center and carry on a meeting while the other members sit in a circle around them and use the score sheets. Shorten the meeting and then carry on the discussion with everyone.

Facilitator's Role

A facilitator is different from the typical leader or chairperson. The difference is in how they use their role. The leader/chairperson decides what and how things will be done, tells people they are out of order, etc. The facilitator asks, suggests, reminds, keeps track of the main agenda and then sees if people are ready for a decision. Generally the facilitator is there to see that all members feel they are having a say and are listened to and accepted. She attempts to stay very neutral. A facilitator tries to provide just enough structure so that what's happening between people doesn't interfere with the topic on the agenda.

Following are a number of points a facilitator should keep in mind:

Keep Members on the Topic:

- Let members know when the discussion has drifted. Usually they will quickly return to the topic at hand.
- Every now and then repeat the topic under discussion. "Isn't this what we were discussing?"

Summarize What Members Have Said:

- In particular summarize what less active members have said. "Your feeling is that . . . "
- Relate what one person says to others' ideas. "It sounds like you're adding to what Robbie said."
- Accept parts of ideas and ask if the person could develop the idea more.
- Let people know when someone has been cut off and ask them to finish what they were saying. "I think we've cut Duane off, did you have more you wanted to say?"

Let People Know That Feelings Are OK:

- Summarize feelings as well as content. "Dave, you seem to be disturbed about something . . ."

State the Problem in a Constructive Way So People Can Work on It:

- State the problem like a problem, not like someone is at fault.
- Give problems and questions to the group, not answers.
- Clear up what decision the group needs to make so people don't waste their time on other things.

Suggest Ways To Solve the Problems:

- Let members know when it may be time to move on to the next problem or agenda item.
- Try to break up giant problems into workable pieces and deal with each separately.

Every Now and Then Summarize What Has Happened/Been Decided:

- Be sure to restate a decision after it has been made by the group.

Things Facilitators Should Avoid

In no way will the facilitator be effective if she does not remain neutral. She should not become a key participant in what's happening, nor try to manipulate the group by using the facilitator's role to get her personal agenda on the table.

The Facilitator should specifically avoid:

- criticizing the ideas or values of others;

- forcing your own ideas on the group by using your facilitator role (When you must add your own ideas let people know you are doing so as a member and not as facilitator. It may at times be better to ask someone else to be the facilitator so you can get into the battle.);

- making decisions for the other members without asking them for agreement;

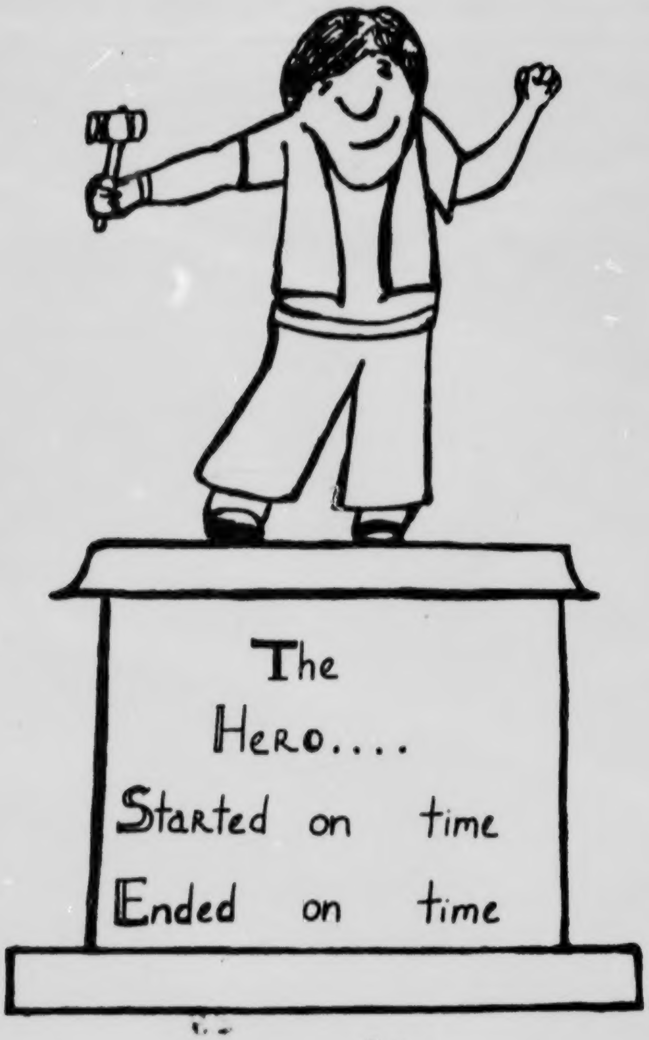
- saying a lot or getting too involved when you are the facilitator (this could distract you and might get the whole group off track).

Facilitation Observation Sheet

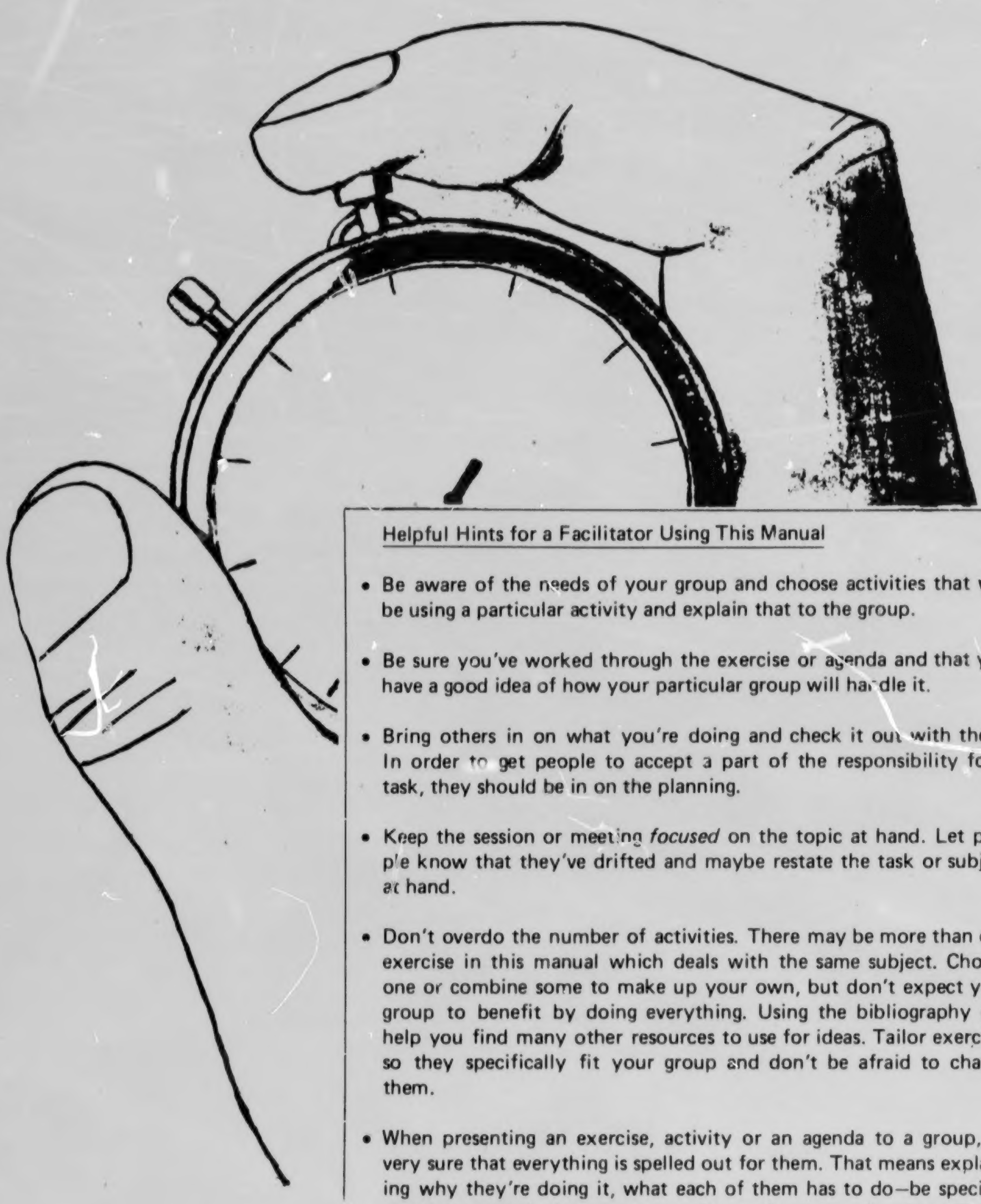
Instructions: Put the number of the facilitator in the column at the top of the list each time. Place a mark (e.g. ~~IIII~~ I I I I) each time the facilitator exhibits the behaviors indicated below. (Take notes where possible for discussions that will follow.)

FACILITATOR	First	Second	Third
1. **Keeps the meeting focused on the topic:** a. Points out the discussion has drifted. b. Re-states the original topic.			
2. **Clarifies and accepts communication:** a. Summarizes a contribution. b. Relates ideas. c. Points out when someone is cut off and invites him to continue.			
3. **Accepts feeling as valid data:** a. Summarizes feelings.			
4. **States a problem in a constructive way:** a. Re-states problem to eliminate blame-fixing. b. Sends problems, not solutions. c. Helps clarify areas of decision-making.			
5. **Suggests a procedure or problem-solving approach:** a. Points out times to move on. b. Makes a suggestion of procedure.			

FACILITATOR	First	Second	Third
6. **Summarizes and clarifies direction:** a. Summarizes what meeting has accomplished and indicates next steps.			
7. **Behaviors to be avoided:** a. Judging or criticizing ideas or feelings. b. Asserting own ideas. c. Making decisions for team. d. Lengthy comments.			


The
Hero....
Started on time
Ended on time

Bob Biagi



Helpful Hints for a Facilitator Using This Manual

- Be aware of the needs of your group and choose activities that will be using a particular activity and explain that to the group.

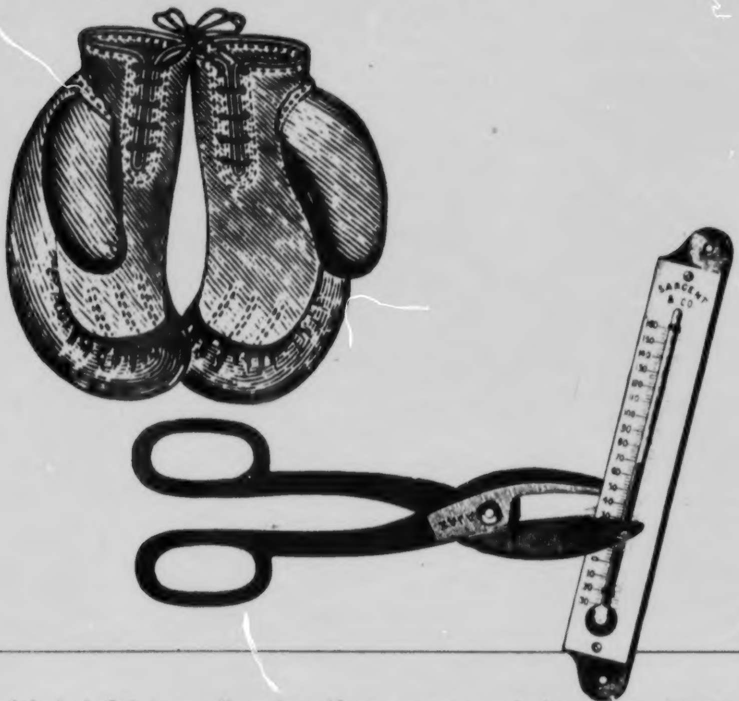
- Be sure you've worked through the exercise or agenda and that you have a good idea of how your particular group will handle it.

- Bring others in on what you're doing and check it out with them. In order to get people to accept a part of the responsibility for a task, they should be in on the planning.

- Keep the session or meeting *focused* on the topic at hand. Let people know that they've drifted and maybe restate the task or subject at hand.

- Don't overdo the number of activities. There may be more than one exercise in this manual which deals with the same subject. Choose one or combine some to make up your own, but don't expect your group to benefit by doing everything. Using the bibliography can help you find many other resources to use for ideas. Tailor exercises so they specifically fit your group and don't be afraid to change them.

- When presenting an exercise, activity or an agenda to a group, be very sure that everything is spelled out for them. That means explaining why they're doing it, what each of them has to do—be specific, repeat it, write it down on newsprint or give them a handout. This is where most group activities break down—when people don't *clearly* understand what they are supposed to do. You may find that no matter what you do some people will never understand it. That may be due to the fact that they've never experienced anything like this before. Or it may be that the exercise won't work with your group.



It's helpful to realize that if one person admits not understanding something, there are sure to be others who are just as baffled but afraid to speak up.

- Try to relate what one person says to ideas presented by others.
- Accept ideas from people even if the ideas are incomplete. Ask if they or others can add to them.
- Try not to allow people to cut others off unless they are finished. Then again, be assertive and ask the long-winded person if he could wrap it up so others can have some input.
- Accept a member's feelings as well as the content of what he says. When someone's angry acknowledge it so people can feel they're being heard and that it's all right to be real.
- The facilitator should avoid criticizing the ideas of other members.
- Exercises, activities and even meetings are tools used to achieve something. If you use woodworking tools in the wrong way for a project you may end up getting hurt or ruining your project, or maybe both. The same is true when you fiddle around with group process. If the exercise threatens or makes a fool of someone this time you'll never get their support next time.
- Know what you as a facilitator are going to do during the session; it helps to think about it first.
- Summarize and clarify what members have contributed, especially those who don't seem to be very involved. That attention may bring them back into things.

Chapter III:

Motivation

Why do I do It

One of the reasons that groups don't work efficiently is that the members are not motivated by what they are doing and have never thought critically about what motivates them personally. Thus, when the goals, objectives, and individual projects are set up for the group, people will do them but they will lack what advertisers tell us the good beer is supposed to have—GUSTO. Therefore, it would probably be helpful for individuals to think about why they are personally motivated. This can play a definite role in encouraging new members to join—if the group can offer satisfaction for what motivates individuals.

The following is an exercise which allows you to think about and discuss some of the things that motivate you. The exercise handout sheet which follows the directions is a useful tool in itself just to read through and think about why you're sitting in a meeting at 7:00 every Tuesday night and why others aren't. I've found that some people who refuse to participate in a workshop will get quite interested talking about what motivates them (nobody ever asked before) and it might pay to just hand them the sheets to read and think about at home. My experience has been that this serves two purposes. First, it provides information in a non-threatening way to people who may think they know it all ("There's nothing those people can teach me."). Secondly, it gets the old die-hards and blow-hards so interested in what the rest of the group will answer to these questions that they may get so absorbed in observing they'll eventually end up participating.

Exercise:

Why do I do It (Motivation)

PART I

1. Divide the members into groups of three to five people.

2. Pass out the **Why Do I Do It Sheet** to each person and ask them to select the five items that best answer the question, "Why do I participate in this group or on this board?" You can use a specific activity or project instead of the words "this group" (i.e., "Why do I participate in this activity?") Again, be flexible.

3. When the members have made their selections individually, they should then share them with the others in their subgroup and explain the reasons for their selections. Each person is permitted to make any changes if they wish on their list. The lists are then put aside until later.

PART II

1. Give each subgroup one of the following problems, or better yet make up one of your own. They have 10 minutes to develop three ways they would use to motivate the person in the problem and to identify a few advantages and disadvantages of the methods they chose.

Sample Problem Situations:

- How would you get Greg to start attending meetings? Greg has already missed three out of the last four meetings.
- How would you get your spouse to stop offering your private wine stock to her friends and relatives?
- How would you get your husband or relative to shave his beard?
- The mayor has just fired the director of an agency who has been very useful to you and others because the mayor wants to appoint her cousin to the post. You want the mayor to change her mind. How would you do this?
- How would you get your local representative to vote in favor of the upcoming amendment?
- How would you keep your teenager from getting arrested during the upcoming demonstration to stop (even though you were going to be there)?
- How would you get your friend Dave, who is on your committee, to stop working so hard and let you help him before he burns out?

2. Now have the discussion leader or a recorder take down on sheets of newsprint a few words on some of the solutions each sub-group came up with.

3. Have the following questions ready on newsprint. Add a couple of your own or ones that the group comes up with. With a marker, write A, B, C, D (corresponding to the questions which follow) on each of the solutions you brainstormed in Part II, to indicate which of the following answers they choose.

A. *Did you use the carrot (some form of reward)?*

B. *Did you use the stick (some form of power)?*

C. *Did you use some sort of outside influence?*

D. *Did you rely on the person herself?*

PART III

1. Have a score sheet prepared on newsprint to correspond to the numbers on the "Why do I do it?" sheets (the first part of this exercise) that were filled out earlier. Using those sheets, have the group vote for the top five choices. Each person has a total of five votes, one for each of their choices. Tally up the results and select the five highest.

2. Now have the group rate each of the five selections against the "carrot and the stick questions" above—and discuss the relationship between what they said motivated them and the methods they were willing to use on others.

3. Now take a real task or project that the group is involved in at the present or in the future. In a discussion or using the brainstorm method, figure out ways that the group might use to make members more motivated.

WHY DO I DO IT SHEET

Think of an activity, project or a group/board that you have been a part of in some way. Read through the following list and select five items that best answer the question, "Why do I participate in ______________ ?" Feel free to add your own items in the space provided.

1. I like it, it's fun.
2. It's easy for me to do it, I'm good at it.
3. I like the other people who are doing it.
4. I'm getting paid to do it.
5. I don't trust someone else to do it.
6. It's something that has to be done, and no one else is going to do it.
7. I mind doing it less than others, so I'll do it.
8. People trust me doing it.
9. People respect me when I do it.
10. It gives me a chance to do something I can do well.
11. It's an important thing to do.
12. If I don't do it, there will be more trouble than it's worth.
13. I've been in on the planning, so I should see it through.
14. I enjoy having a responsibility like that.

15. It gives me a chance to do it the way I want to.

16. It's something I believe in.

17. I like working with the person who is the chairperson.

18. It's something that can help me to develop new skills.

19. I may not be getting money but I'm getting something else.

20. If I do this, then I'll get

21. It's a good way to make new friends and meet important people.

22. It's something I've always wanted to do.

23. It will help a lot of people who really need it.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

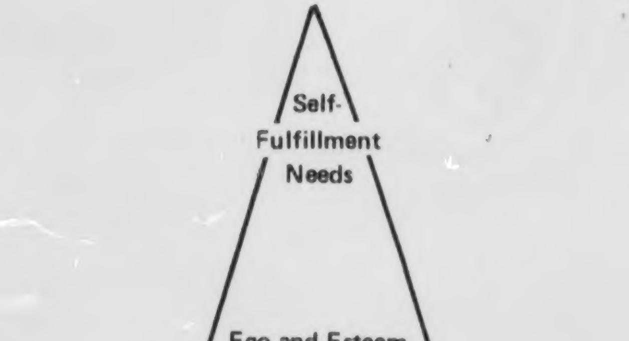
29.

30.

The Pyramid of Needs—Why People Do What They Do

It is interesting and useful to be aware of what and how researchers view what motivates all of us.

Abraham Maslow, a humanistic psychologist, developed a simple tool to explain why people do things. He and other researchers found that people were motivated to do things as a result of their basic human needs. He put these needs into the shape of a triangle with the basic human needs at the bottom and the higher human needs at the top.


Self-Fulfillment Needs
Ego and Esteem Needs
Love Needs—Social Needs
Safety Needs
Physical/Survival Needs

To do what you must to become fully yourself. To develop your own individuality. To become everything you are capable of becoming.

Respect and liking for yourself and others. Strength, competence, status, achievement, freedom, fame.

Acceptance, membership, affection, belonging, feeling loved and wanted.

Protection from physical and psychological threat, fear, and anxiety. The need for order, structure and security.

Food, water, shelter, clothing, etc.

Some of the points made with this triangle may be useful to members of groups or boards who are interested in motivating old members and looking for new ones. First, the most basic needs at the bottom of the triangle must be satisfied before people can be motivated by the higher needs at the top. This becomes especially important for groups which are being formed in low-income areas. It gives you some idea of what types of people can be recruited and maintained for a particular reason. In a way it says that before people can be expected to work for something that will give them status or esteem, they have to have jobs and security—they would probably be much more willing to fight for a decent job, than to be on a board or a group out to stop the danger of nuclear power.

It is also very interesting to note that while the basic needs have to be met before people will seek to fulfill the higher needs, when these needs have been met they will no longer be useful as motivators. Improving one's skills in order to get a job would not motivate someone who already has a good job. In that case, motivation must fulfill higher needs. The understanding of the different types of needs and how they relate to an organization and its goals is an important area to be aware of for anyone interested in improving a group's effectiveness.

Citizen groups, from mandated citizen boards and councils to grassroots organizations are made up of people with many needs. In order to have these groups function effectively, so they *can* gain control over the decisions which affect their lives, they must first learn how to work together as a group or team to fulfill these needs.

The important thing to remember in developing "people power" is to accept and respect the fact that every member has a contribution to make. And that releasing and utilizing those human resources effectively is the primary ingredient in a successfully functioning group.

Finding, Utilizing and Fulfilling Member's Needs/Interests/ Talents/Skills

Every group should have some way of encouraging its members to express their needs as well as their interests, talents and skills. The first step in this process is to show a willingness to accept and respect a member's ideas, interests and needs. Easier said than done, and often people pay *lip service* to others' needs or ideas, then act on their own agendas. Not that everyone in the group must agree to incorporate all the individual agendas, but there should be a receptivity to them. That is, developing an atmosphere of trust so that no one will fear being ridiculed for opening up their personal agendas to the group.

Exercise:

Identifying Group Needs

This is a simple technique that has worked in new and old groups as well as workshops made up of people from a number of different groups. It's a good idea to run through the practical reasons for doing the exercise as it relates to your specific group. It's very important in doing any exercise to explain the reasons for doing it so that people can buy into the exercise and its outcomes.

1. Break up the workshop into small groups of three or four people. It's a good idea to do this by counting off from one to four so that friends or cliques don't end up together. This can also encourage generation of a wider variety of ideas.

2. Each group selects a recorder whose duty it is to record the results on newsprint.

3. Each group selects a spokesperson whose duty it is to facilitate the group and to explain the results to the workshop as a whole.

4. The task of each member is to share one specific need that they think the group has which might be addressed in a workshop on group process. It could also be something that an individual would like to learn in the workshop. Encourage everyone to stay with the issues at hand.

5. Then consolidate and decide on one need which will represent the group when the spokesperson reports it back to the workshop. It may be helpful to encourage people to select the one need, or develop a new one.

6. Bring the groups back together and have each of the spokespersons explain what their groups came up with and why. These group needs could be prioritized so that they could be dealt with in other exercises. Most important, they should be used and dealt with because the process has raised expectations that the group will not forget.

7. **Discussion**:

   - *Did any of the groups have any problems in coming to a decision for their group?*
   - *Did you notice the process which was used to reach a decision? How could it have been improved?*

   - *Would it have been as easy in a large group?*

   - *What does this say about the role of committees in your group?*

Exercise:
Finding Out
Your Group's Needs,
Skills and Interests

This is an exercise which can be handed out during a meeting to be discussed then or at the following meeting. It can also be used as a non-meeting handout, but it may not work as well that way because people often feel that they're always doing things like this and nothing ever comes of it. Follow-up, then, is important.

1. An exercise such as this can be introduced and the tone set by putting up a quote such as this on newsprint:

> "Groups always underutilize their own human resources."

Or it can be started with a question such as, "Do you feel that your needs, skills and interests are utilized in this group?"

2. Have each group member (or as a whole group) fill out the questionnaire which follows. Have the group decide on relevant questions specific to the group's needs, then answer them as well (see sample which follows).

3. This can be followed by a short discussion asking why needs, skills, etc., are not utilized, and you can deal with the important questions or consequences for the group.

4. It's helpful to ask what other ways your organization might do this sort of exercise so that it's tailored to your group's learning style.

Sample Questionnaire:

Organizational Motivation

"Groups always underutilize their own human resources."

(The first five questions are blank so that the members of your group can fill in the questions which are relevant to them.)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6. What turns you on (organizationally, that is)?

7. Make a list of things that you enjoy most.

8. What do you spend most of your time doing?

9. What would you like to do as a member of your group that you have never had the opportunity to do before? (Look at programs, projects, hopes, directions, goals, feelings, etc.)

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A Few Other Techniques for Making a Group Aware of Individual's Needs/Interests /Talents/Skills

- Keep a card file on members with regularly updated information.

- Conduct personal intereviews using a "round robin" technique or in groups of two or three (this can be done outside of a meeting, in groups of two or three, as done for the introductions exercises; or in a meeting or workshop).

- Share information about groups and individual needs with the group, either verbally or on mimeoed sheets which they can keep a copy of in their files. Again, follow-up is important—if the information is filed away and not referred to often, then members will feel it is a worthless exercise (it raises unfulfilled expectations and creates anger).

If It Could Be: Dream and Vision-Sharing about the Group

In order to deal with the subject of developing an effective citizen group or board, it may help to first try to do a little dreaming—dreaming that is based upon experience and reality. The following represents only some of the characteristics that make up an effective citizen group: please be encouraged to add your own ideas directly in the text so that others who read them may better understand and utilize this manual.

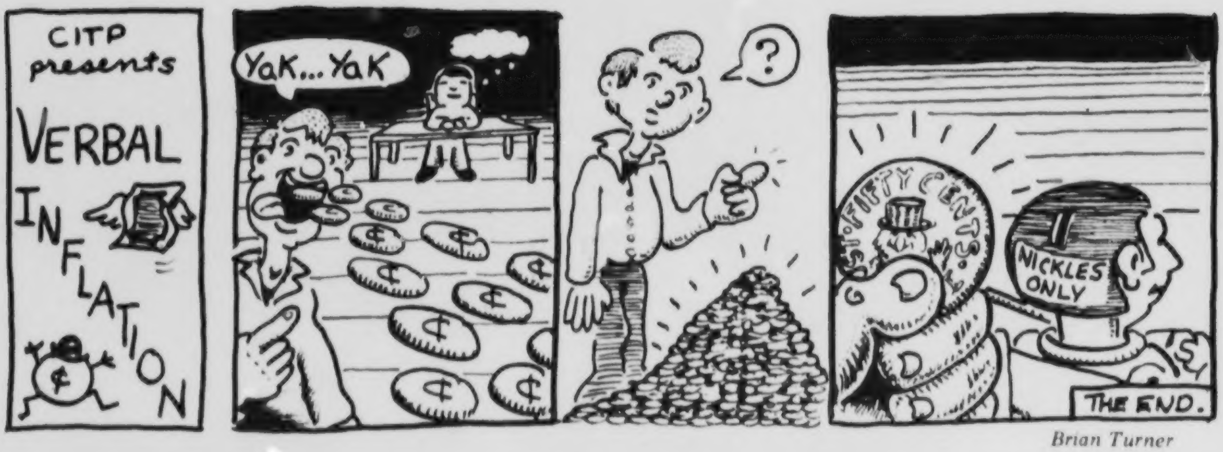
An effective group, agency, or board needs the right type of structure and leadership to fit the goals and objectives of the membership and the group as a whole. This may mean that there is a strong leader in whom everyone has faith, but more commonly it means some variation of shared leadership and responsibility. Shared leadership may take the form of a collective, such as the type of decision-making style we have at CITP, or it may take the form of a system of strong committees, where everyone is involved in making the decisions and implementing them. Whatever the style, everyone should feel comfortable and confident with it.

A comfortable structure should:

- be concerned about all of its members: their needs as well as their goals, so that the group strives to develop individual members as well as the group as a whole;
- have the strength and understand the techniques necessary to deal with the internal problems and decisions as well as the external ones;
- have a degree of solidarity even when the chips are low;
- have shared goals that everyone understands and accepts, ones that are not only possible but are also compatible with the needs and goals of individual members;
- utilize the skills and talents of all members;

- have used its membership or have access to the human resources necessary to accomplish its objectives;
- have a pool of at least seven to 12 working members;
- have a time schedule that is not only accepted by everyone but is also used;
- have a membership which listens and communicates clearly and openly with each other;
- be open about conflict and willing to deal with it so that it doesn't become a negative force rather than one of positive creativity;
- win some battles or at least feel that they are about to do so;
- have members who respect each other;
- have goals that are financially realistic;
- have a good understanding of and agreement on priorities;
- share responsibilities so that a few workers don't get burned out.

WOULD SOMEBODY PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT'S GOING ON?


CITP presents
VERBAL INFLATION
YaK...YaK
?
FIFTY CENTS
NICKLES ONLY
THE END.

Brian Turner

Chapter IV:

Developing Listening Skills

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What You Say and How I Hear It

How do you make people aware of the fact that they may hear what other people are saying but they aren't really listening?

Few of us ever really listen. It seems to be a part of our modern media culture: we are bombarded everywhere we turn by super sophisticated media which is out to sell us everything it possibly can, even if we don't need it. We've been conditioned by television and radio with their pounding commercials. Then we're told "We do it all for you." Interestingly, many of us hear these commercials but we have adapted in such a way that we don't really listen to them. And that adaptation somehow has become a part of us in all our activities from work, to play, to meetings. So some of the blame for the lack of listening skills in group meetings is the fact that we are simply overloaded with information, words and stimuli. We have to shut off at some point. Groups that have poor listeners in their membership are inevitably headed for conflict. It's analogous to the generation gap which is really a communication gap. Parents and children *hear* each other but they are not really understanding each other.

Most of us never realize the difference. If you have ever tried to give directions for an exercise to a group, then you have already gotten a clear idea of how often people don't listen. It's been found that writing all directions down on newsprint so that everyone can read them, or handing out individual copies usually helps. But there are still those who don't listen even when the act of "listening" is with their eyes.

This point can be tested in your own group by using the exercise which follows.

Exercise:

Simon Says

This is a relatively simple exercise. If done quickly, it can provide some frustration but also some fun. It's also good for those of us who think that we are always listening and don't really need to do this sort of exercise.

1. Explain to the group what you are doing and why. That might sound like this: "Most people don't communicate or listen accurately in either individual conversations or a group setting. What we're going to try now is to see how well you can listen to directions."

2. Pass out a sheet of paper to each person. Tell them that you're going to give them some simple directions to follow using a sheet of paper. Let them know that you will give the directions only once and that you will say them clearly but quickly. The group must follow the directions without any questions, and you will not repeat any directions. (The directions follow.)

3. After you have read the directions to the group, and they have followed them, have everyone open the sheet they end up with and ask them to raise their hands if they think it's correct. You don't need to keep score, but usually 25% of the participants will do everything correctly.

4. Get a discussion going if it hasn't already started. Some suggested questions might be: "Why do you think so many people didn't do the exercise correctly? Would anyone have done better if this were an important group task or item of business? What would have helped?"

5. Use the exercise to lead into a discussion about **hearing** versus **listening**, and what it means to your group.

Simon Says Direction Sheet

(Read these out loud, clearly but quickly.)

1. On the top of the left hand side write the name of the country you live in at present.

2. Along the right-hand side write the name of the state you live in presently.

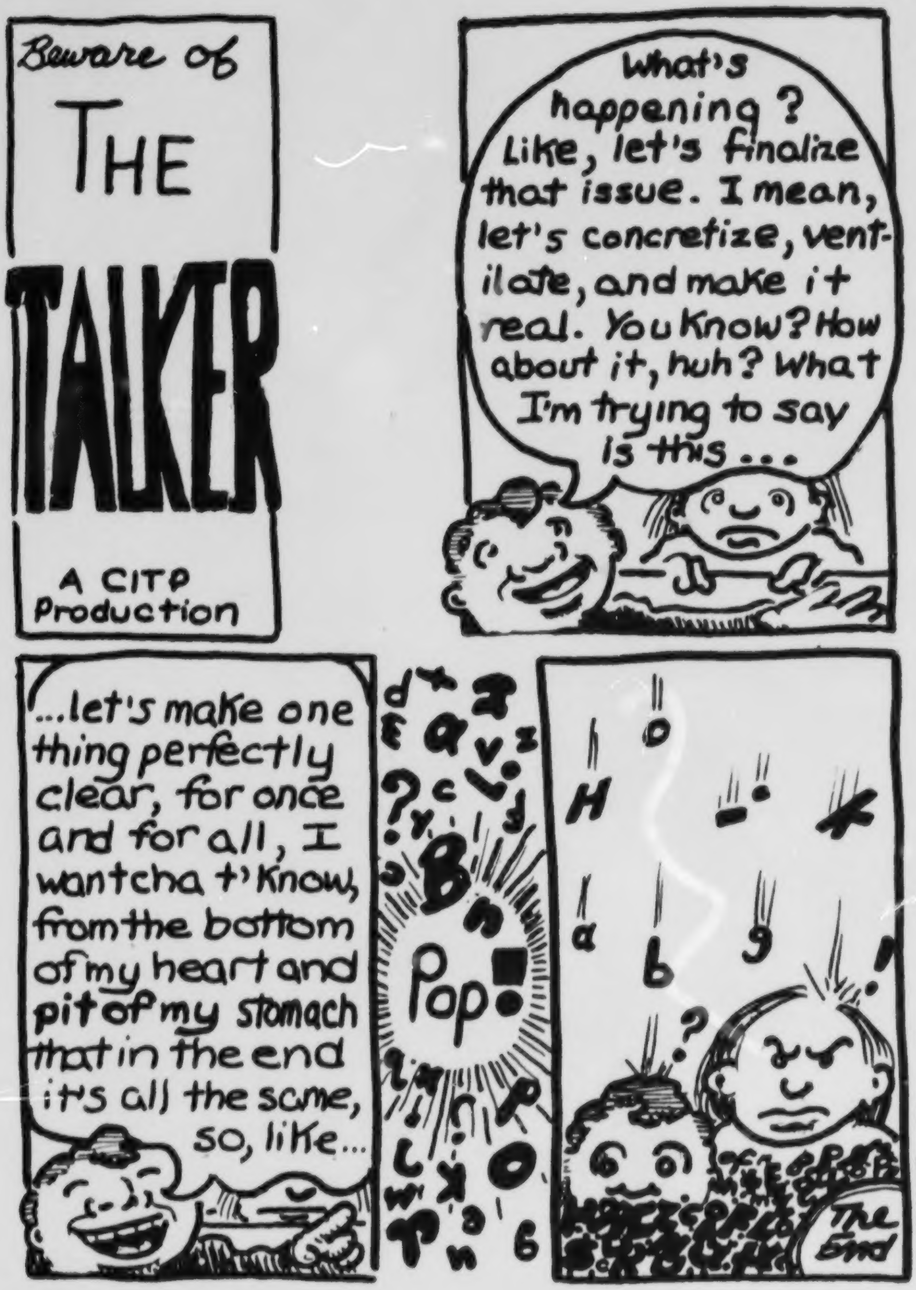
3. Draw a line from the top right-hand corner to the bottom left-hand corner.

4. Draw a line from the center of the top to the center of the bottom.

5. Fold your paper along the center line with the left side over the right side.

6. Now draw a diagonal line from the top left corner to the bottom right corner and write your first name three times on the diagonal line.

7. Fold your paper into thirds and hand it to the person next to you.


Beware of
THE
TALKER
A CITP Production
What's happening? Like, let's finalize that issue. I mean, let's concretize, ventilate, and make it real. You Know? How about it, huh? What I'm trying to say is this...
...let's make one thing perfectly clear, for once and for all, I wantcha t' Know, from the bottom of my heart and pit of my stomach that in the end it's all the same, so, like...
Pop!
The End

Brian Turner

Listening and Restating

Up to this point we've been attempting to raise people's awareness of the barriers to communicating and listening accurately. The following exercise is one to help members learn to communicate and listen effectively. It's been called "restatement," "repeating," and "active listening." It's a very useful technique that I've come to use not only in CITP and other groups, but also at home with my family. It's a useful technique that can sometimes be a meeting-saver when things are on the verge of an outright blowout. This exercise works best with real issues and problems, but you can develop your own examples to give everyone experience with the technique. There are two variations of **Listening and Restating**, *the first may be used in small or large groups, while the second is designed for pairs.*

Exercise:

A. Facilitating and Restatement

1. Divide into groups of five or six members each.

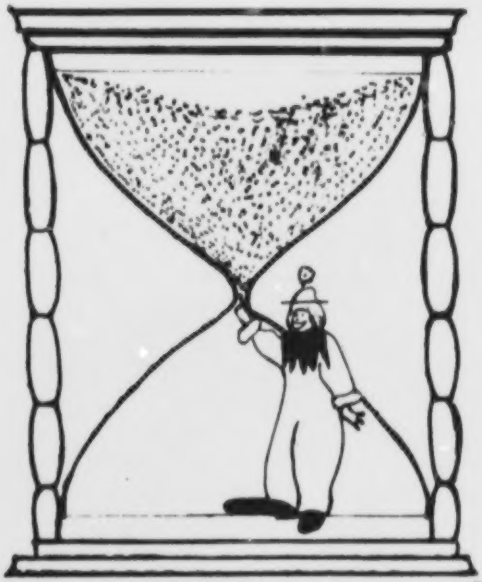
2. Have each group select a relevant topic of interest in which everyone can participate. Be prepared to make suggestions about what topics to choose—some issue in the news might do.

3. Have each group choose a timekeeper who will also make sure facilitators follow the rules.

4. Each person will have five minutes to lead the discussion as a facilitator. (Remember a facilitator is a neutral person whose job it is to summarize and clarify what the others in the group are saying.)

5. Anyone in the group can say what they wish about the topic, but, before another person can speak the facilitator must summarize/clarify what has been said. After five minutes the next person becomes the facilitator. If the subject becomes overworked the group can speak about anything it wishes to, but the facilitator role continues.

6. When everyone has had a chance at being a facilitator, have the groups discuss reactions and what they learned about listening. Then bring everyone together and report back to the others.



Bob Biagi

Exercise:

B. Restating with Partners

1. Each member chooses a partner with whom he may not always agree (this is not a must). They sit together and begin to discuss an issue (the facilitator could provide the topic if necessary).

2. The pair's objective is to let either one begin the discussion and say what he wishes about the issue. Then before the second person responds she must restate the important thing said by the first person. Thus each partner must restate before responding.

3. After this, have each pair discuss what they may have learned from the exercise and report this back to the rest of the group.

Suggested Variations

- If people strongly disagree or if one talks too much, set a time limit on the length of time each person may speak.
- If the issue involves almost everyone in the group, then this could be used with everyone looking on. And if other people want to be a part, allow this as long as they also restate what the previous person has said.

This can develop into a way of checking out if members understand what has been said during a meeting. In our own meetings at CITP, the facilitator tries to clarify what has been said before it goes into the minutes of the meeting. In our case, if the facilitator doesn't do this or doesn't do it soon enough, someone else will ask an interested member to do it or do it themselves automatically. The reason for this becomes very clear: if we don't restate our decisions, especially after much controversy and discussion has ensued, people leave the meeting thinking we've agreed to do things that others think they never agreed to do.

It's a useful technique which helps people to listen more closely and begin to check out if what someone has said is what they heard. You may even find yourselves bringing this home to your families as I have done.

Getting Feedback

If you and your group got something out of the last exercise, the following one will take the idea of accurate communication and listening one step further. In fact, you might prefer to work through the following exercise instead of the previous one; use your judgment and be flexible. In this one the importance of feedback in communication is emphasized. Without some sort of feedback from the listener, neither the speaker nor the listener really knows whether the information that has been communicated has been received accurately.

Exercise:

To Feed Back
or Not to Feed Back

Explain to the group that this exercise will demonstrate the need for feedback in order to communicate and listen accurately.

Part I

1. First find a volunteer who will try to communicate with the others without the use of feedback or nonverbals.

2. Pass out blank sheets of paper to the group and explain the following task:

   - The volunteer leader will give the group directions to copy a simple drawing.
   - The volunteer has as much time as she needs to communicate the directions for making the drawing, using only verbal directions.
   - Give the volunteer a copy of Figure Number 1 and instruct the group that she may only use verbal communication. She will not face the group or use her hands for directions.
   - The group is instructed that they are to ask no questions and that, in the spirit of the exercise, they are not to make any comments of any sort.

3. As the volunteer directs the drawing of Figure Number 1, be aware of the reactions of the group members as well as those of the volunteer. Also be aware of the length of time it takes to complete the drawings.

4. Have each person mark on their sheet whether they think they have made an accurate drawing. Then check with the volunteer to see if she feels she has communicated the information accurately.

Part II

Get a second volunteer to direct the drawing of Figure Number 2. This time allow the volunteer to receive feedback and use nonverbal information (body language). Then pass out a second sheet of blank paper to each person in the group.

1. Give drawing number 2 to the volunteer and explain the following directions to everyone:

    - The volunteer will direct the group in drawing Figure Number 2.
    - He will face the group this time and have as much time as necessary to give thorough directions.
    - He is also permitted to use any nonverbals he needs, and anyone from the group can ask anything they wish to help them complete the drawing.

2. Again observe the group and the volunteers and keep a check on how much time it takes to complete the drawing.

3. After the group finishes, show them the two figures and on newsprint keep score of how many people copied Figure Number 1 and Figure Number 2 accurately.

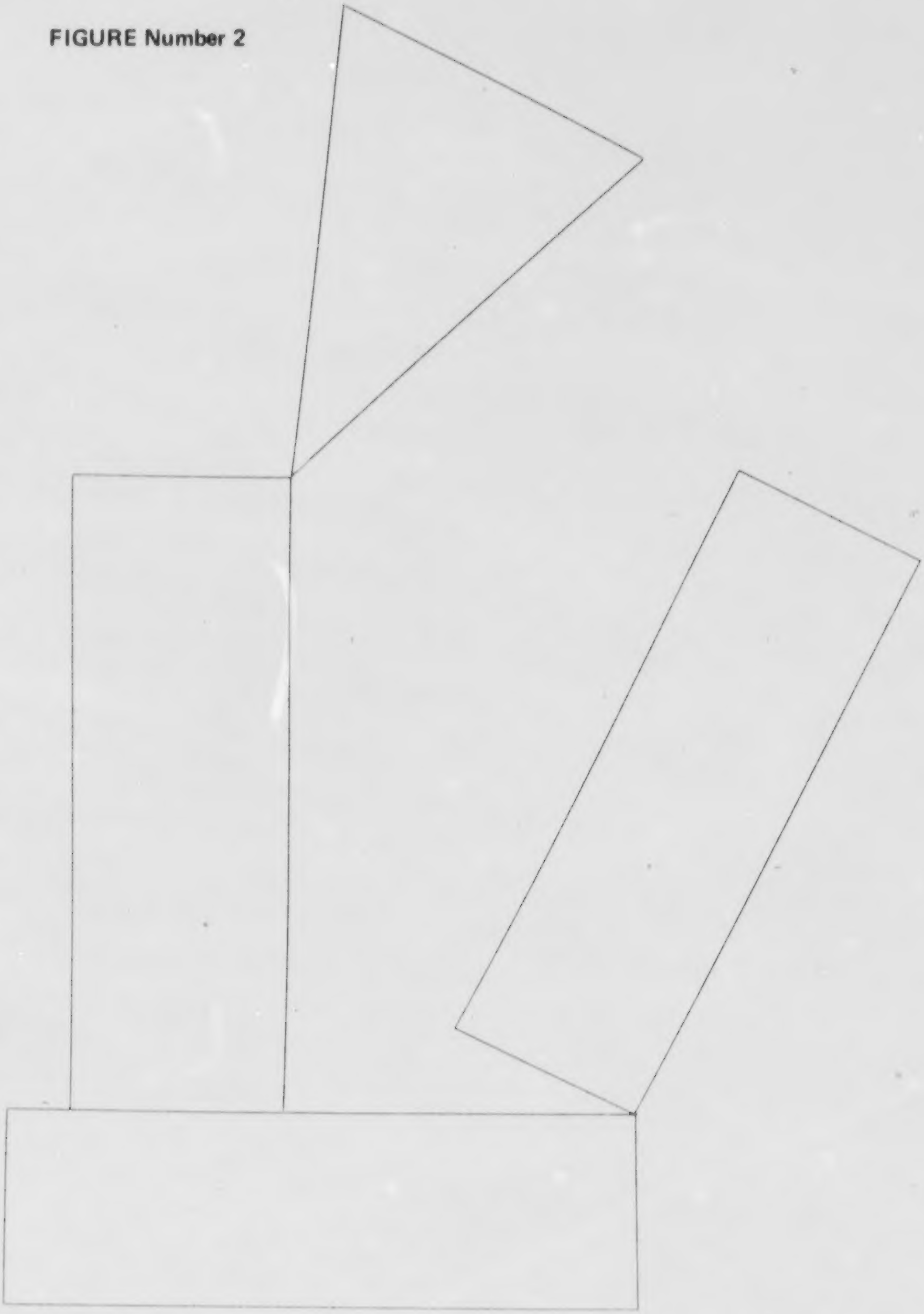
4. If the group doesn't spontaneously begin a discussion, it might be helpful to have them discuss the following:

    - How did the volunteers (1 and 2) feel during each exercise?
    - How much time did each part take to complete?
    - What was the difference in accuracy between communication number 1 and communication number 2?
    - How can this experience be related to actual cases or experiences in your group meetings?
    - What can be done about it?

It's at this point that I usually bring up an old joke my friends used to say about me: If I ever sat on my hands I wouldn't be able to speak. Funny thing, but that may be partly true when it comes to communicating accurately.

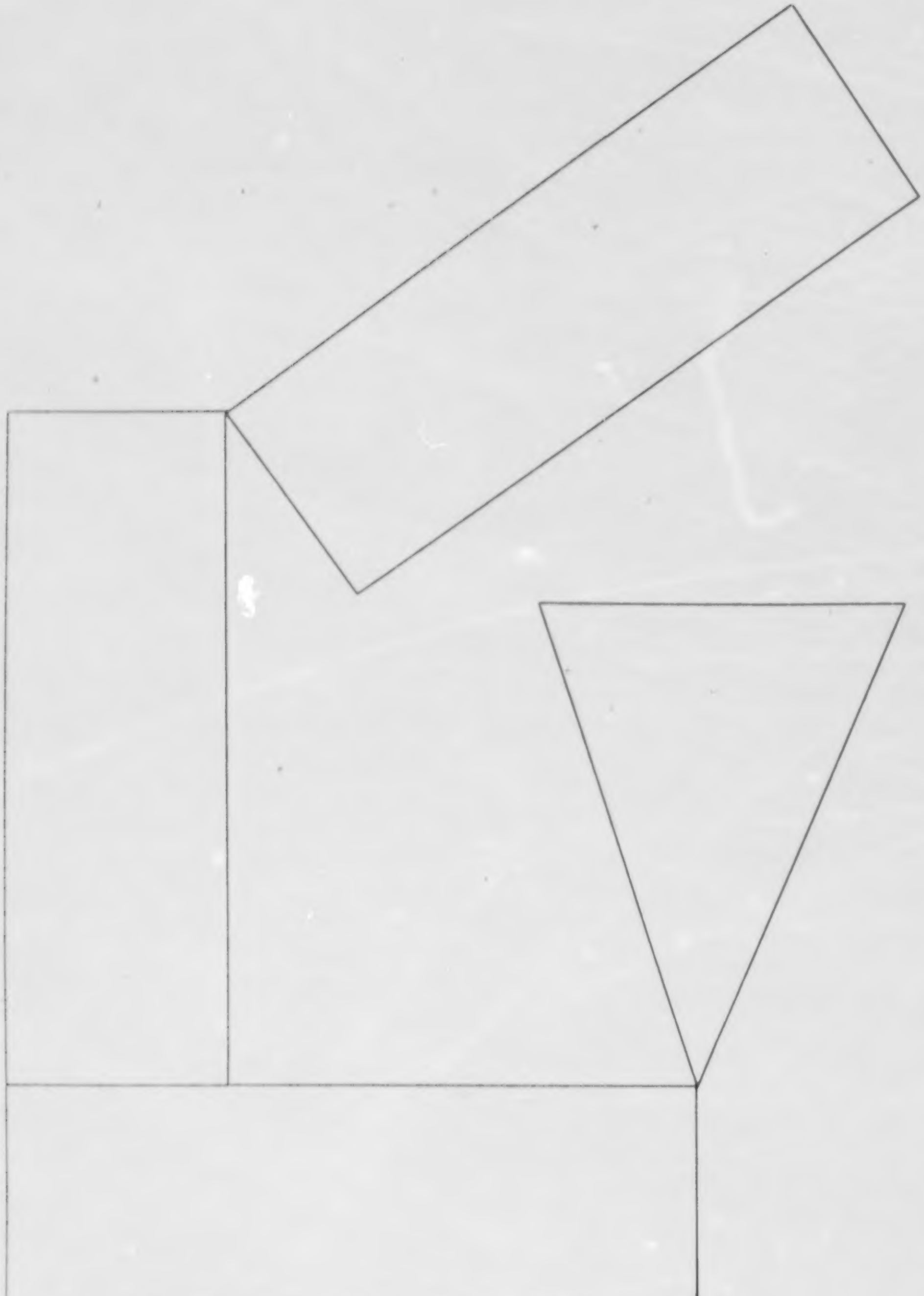
FEEDBACK

FIGURE Number 2



FEEDBACK

Figure Number 1



Exercise:

What You Say and How You Say It

For those of us who are accustomed to relying on verbal communications to get an idea across, the area of non-verbal communication is a difficult one. An understanding of non-verbal communication, however, can make a group much more sensitive to individual needs. The following is a quick introductory exercise which sets the tenor for the rest of the unit.

Part I

1. Turn to the person next to you.

2. Each of you has three minutes to tell your partner about a time when you agreed with *what* a person said to you BUT you felt bad, intimidated, resentful or put down about *how* it was said to you.

3. After the exercise is completed, the facilitator should start the discussion around the reasons people felt the way they did.

Part II

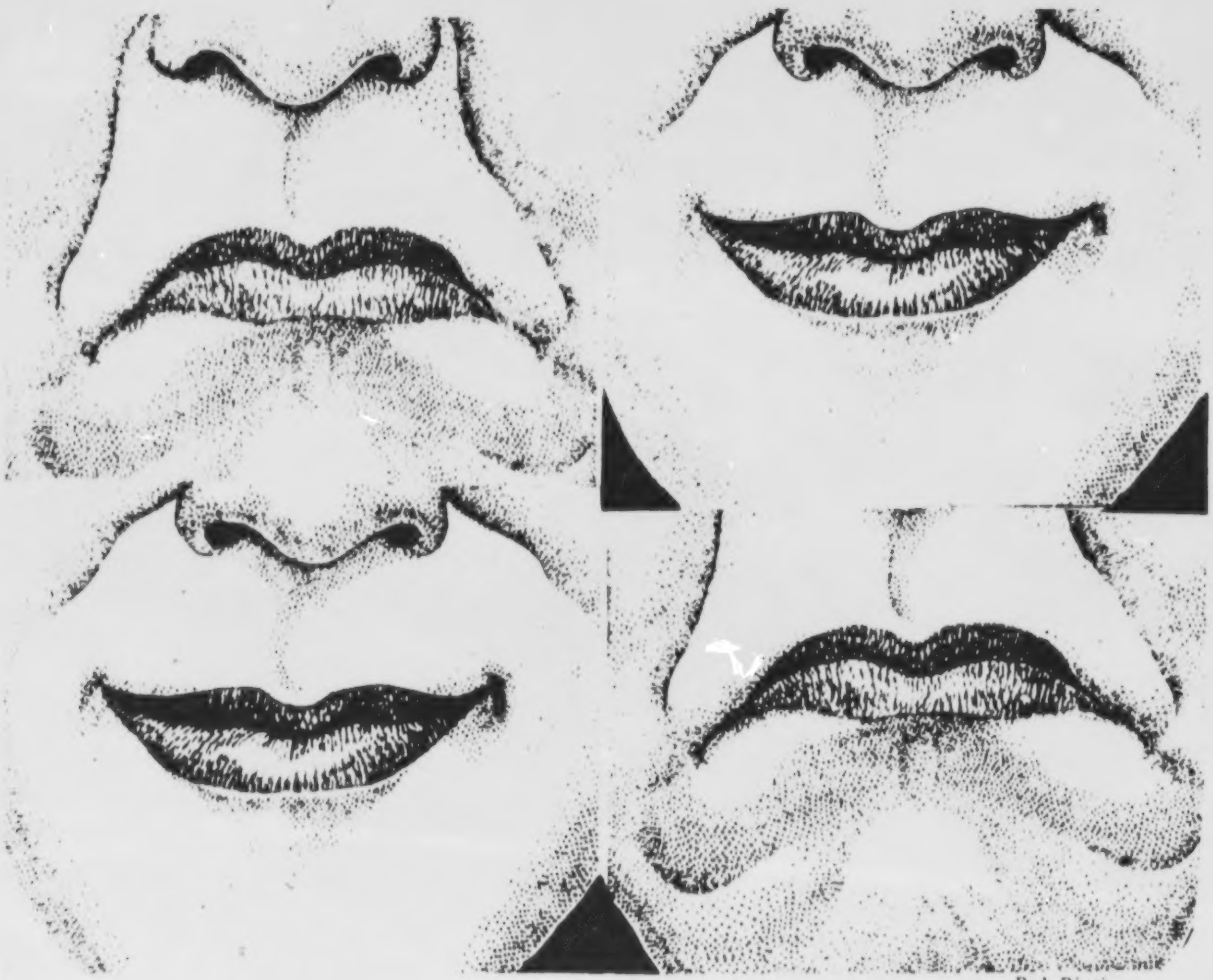
(This part can be done as an exercise or it can simply be explained and then discussed).

1. This is done the same way as the previous task. Partners have three minutes each to discuss a situation in which they strongly disagreed with someone but came away from the interchange having enjoyed it, even though they didn't "win."

2. After the exercise, the facilitator should center the discussion on the possible reasons for this feeling. (It is hoped that the group would bring out the important overriding factors motivating these feelings, that of trust and respect.)

Variation: Half of the pairs could be given the first question, **Part I**, and half the second question, **Part II.** In this way the discussion could bring in a good deal more data that much more quickly.

Experience has shown that groups need very little introduction or coaching to come up with the concepts of trust and respect. This is an important point for a facilitator/trainer. Most of the ideas and concepts in the field of group process are already known and felt by participants. The workshop exercise is really only a tool to help people become aware of what they already feel about others and to apply it to themselves.



Chapter V:

The Power of Communicating Without Speaking

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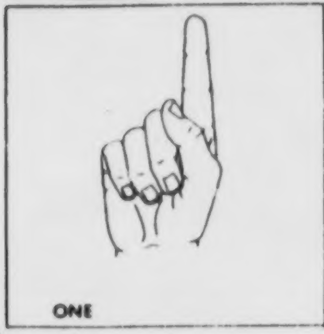
A sensitivity to non-verbal communication (body language) can help explain many difficulties encountered by members of groups. This may also help to explain problems faced by leaders when they try to motivate, make decisions, or even develop any sort of credibility in their groups.

The difference between what an individual tries to say and what the group hears can cause confusion, distrust and even anger, although it was the last thing intended by the speaker. The basic concepts of non-verbal communication are simple and most likely understood by everyone, either knowingly or intuitively. Basically, you can't help but communicate with another person. It's impossible not to send a message—whether you actually speak or are silent.



Much of the communication that takes place in groups is in fact done without words, and it is so silent that the senders and the receivers do not realize what has been communicated. It has been estimated that as much as 65% of what is communicated between people is done without words.* Thus people communicate more by what they do than by what they say. Another way to phrase the quotation, "the medium is the message," when dealing with groups is to say, "The way you say it is what you say."

Non-Verbal Communication

The use of your eyes, smiles, frowns, the tone of your voice, how you hold or position your arms and legs, how close you stand and whether you touch or not, all indicate non-verbal messages to the person to whom you are speaking.

In a situation where your words have one intended meaning and your non-verbal behavior has another, people will select the non-verbal behavior. This can be proved very simply. In a meeting, you can see who is interested, tired, bored, angry, anxious or agreeable to the proceedings by becoming aware of non-verbal messages. If someone in the meeting were to say in a flat tone, "That's a great idea," while they were looking away or doing something else (knitting or reading a newspaper), most of the others would probably think they were being facetious or they really didn't care about the issue.

The development of individuals as group members can sometimes be measured by the awareness members have towards others' non-verbal cues. Usually, the greater the sensitivity to the meaning of gestures, intonations, postures, body movements, eye contact and so on, the more effective group members are in interpreting problems, feelings, hidden agendas and even consensus on issues.

Remember when your mate or parent kept asking what was the matter and you kept saying nothing? They probably know your signals well enough to recognize your mood swings even before you do. The same type of thing can happen with group members who have worked with you for awhile.

One technique you might want to try in your group in order to increase the group's sensitivity to non-verbal communication is to have your meeting video-taped. Video-taping allows people to see not only others but also themselves close up. It can serve as a mirror and can help us see ourselves as others see us (hard as it is to do).

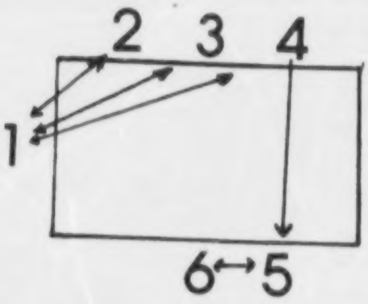
While this may be expensive and difficult to arrange in many cases, community cable access television stations which are growing in number now have equipment available for low cost. Many libraries, colleges and high schools now have portable equipment available for community use.

Another way to sharpen the group's ability to observe non-verbal behavior is to show a film with no sound. It's best to have a short film or even a cartoon. Watch the film as a group and have people pick out a character to observe. After the film, allow time for people to discuss the dynamics of what was happening between characters in the film. Then play the film back with sound to see how accurately the non-verbals were interpreted.

A third way this might be done is to have the group, either at home or together in a meeting, watch part of a TV program. Watching Archie Bunker without sound will many times open up a whole new perspective for even the most sophisticated group members.

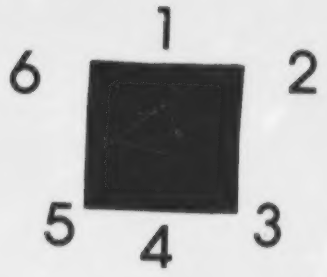
These techniques of using video and film are also good ways to experience the process-observation method which will be discussed later.

Distance and seating also communicate a great deal in groups. A quick experiment might be tried while doing any of the other exercises in this manual. Before starting an exercise, divide members into groups of six or seven and let them each take a chair to form their own group. During the task, call a stop-action and ask everyone to observe where they are sitting in relation to other people in their group. The groups' examples might look like some of the following figures. The lines represent who talks to whom.



All of these seating positions indicate non-verbal elements which communicate something about how the people in each group feel and are acting. You or a facilitator could call the groups' attention to the seating arrangements, but then the participants themselves should be asked what they understand about where they are sitting.

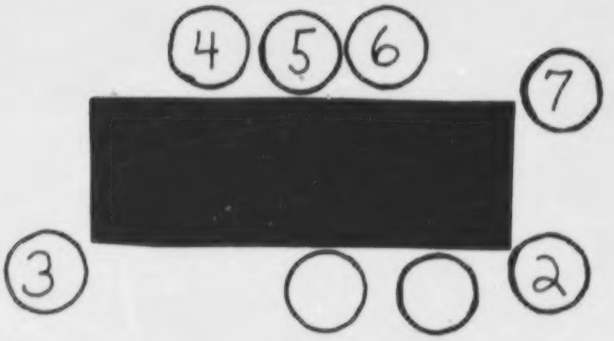
There will probably be differing interpretations; at least people will be becoming aware of what's going on interpersonally while working on the task at hand. These clues, when added to other observations can usually present a pretty accurate picture of what kind of feelings exist in the group and what dynamics may be present.



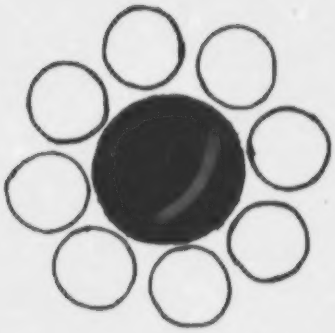
Although this diagram indicates person number 1 as the leader, it also may suggest an unsureness about roles or the extent to which persons number 2-6 wish to participate.

That's Not How They Did It On Our Block: Cross-Cultural Differences in Non-Verbal Behavior

The language used by humanity through most of our prehistory has been non-verbal. Yet not all people communicate the same way in some universal non-verbal language that everyone can understand. Not only do women and men use nonverbals differently, but there are class, generation, regional, ethnic and national cultural differences.



Persons number 4, 5 and 6 stick together; persons number 2 and 7 might be trying to be leaders of the group, while number 3 has isolated himself.



Compactness, closeness, common interest, equality.

Eye behavior is one non-verbal behavior which differs greatly, depending on the place and ethnic and class backgrounds of people. Studies show that urban whites avoid eye contact within 16-32 feet of another person. (That is, if they aren't looking for something specific like a brochure or handout. This varies though, in smaller towns, especially in the western part of the country.)

Once a person enters this "no-look zone," the most one can comfortably do is steal a glance at a passerby. Yet the social rule says that people within the recognition distance must greet friends or risk insult. Staring too much in our culture is considered aggressive. Generalities, yes—but you get the idea.

A common example is the uncomfortable feeling a white middle-class American has in a foreign country. A common American tourist's reaction to the people in the other country is the observation that the people were "practically on top of us" when they spoke, or were staring or smiling for some imagined negative reason. The problem is that we often use our own culture's set of criteria to judge or interpret the non-verbal rules that are allowed in other places. As a result, a friendly gesture might be interpreted as aggression or a con.

An interesting experiment that anyone can try is to watch what people in their neighborhood or community do when they meet or pass on the street. Then make a comparison when you are in another city or town. There are actually specific measured distances which people from different ethnic and class groups keep between each other.

Urban blacks, however, maintain very different rules of non-verbal behavior. Eye contact with strangers is permissable. It is no wonder, then, that confusion and communication gaps arise when a few of these cultural, social rules mix in a meeting.

Few people realize how much we all depend on body movement in our conversation, or are aware of those hidden rules that, like street behavior, govern our listening behavior. Yet intuitively we know when someone isn't listening.

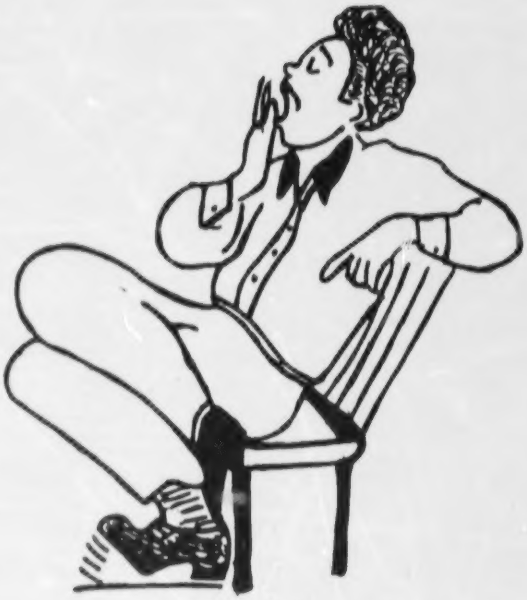
In white middle-class American culture, when a person wants to let the talker know that they are listening, they look at the other person's face and eyes. In fact, it has been found that shifting your gaze from one eye to the other or even looking at a person's chin makes both individuals feel they are communicating, and makes each more comfortable.

If you watch most people who are engaged in conversations, you will notice that people often indicate that they are listening by nodding their heads or inserting one or two word exclamations. If one person is in agreement with what the other person is saying, she may nod vigorously. Sometimes, when people want to show agreement or pleasure they smile. If they are not sure they agree, they may raise an eyebrow or pull down the corners of their mouths. If they want to end a conversation, they may begin shifting the position of their bodies, moving from foot to foot, stretching their legs, crossing and uncrossing their arms or legs, or shuffling their feet. You will also notice a definite shifting of the eyes away from the speaker. The more the listener fidgets, the more the speaker should understand his time is up.

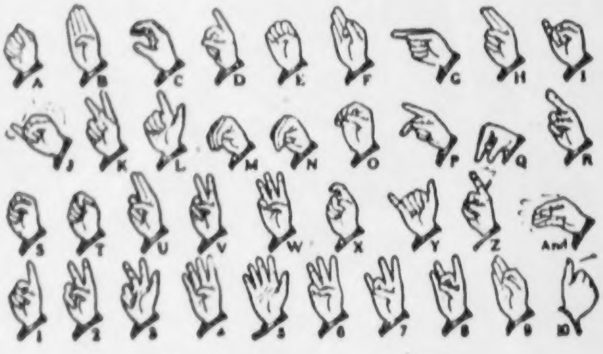
Different class and cultural rules, when not taken into account in a meeting, can lead to unnecessary disagreements and more consistently **a lack of trust.**

A favorite example of this is a pre-meeting discussion between two members of an advisory board. They need to unite in order to stop a typical bureaucratic blunder an agency is about to commit. Each is trying to indicate an interest in the issue and be friendly. As they talk, the Latino, following his cultural rules, moves closer and closer to his potential ally. The Anglo, following his class and cultural norms, interprets this as pushiness or even aggression and not only backs away from the close contact, but also shifts his eyes away from the Latino's open yet direct eye contact. The retreating movements of the Anglo shout loudly in a silent language to the Latino and an atmosphere of mistrust evolves.

Non-verbal language is a very complex subject, yet we all speak it. Most people are fortunate to have developed their own individual systems based on their own class, sex, culture and other life experiences. Yet without some attempt to deal with and understand this silent language, many groups—even the ones made up of people with similar backgrounds—can create unnecessary communication problems.*



Bob Biagi



The American Manual Alphabet

The exercises which follow may be helpful in beginning a verbal dialogue about our non-verbal language. It is important to remember that the discussion which follows the exercises is more important than the exercise itself.

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*An interesting book on this subject is Julian Fast's **Body Language** (New York, M. Evans and Co., 1970).

This exercise is a way to practice non-verbal skills and attempt to interpret the non-verbal language of others. It's an exercise that always reminds me of when I was a kid, out with my parents visiting relatives. I always knew when I was doing something wrong or when I could have a piece of candy. My mother never said a word to me; all she did was look, that was enough. In fact, my aunts, knowing the rules of the language, would stand in front of me so that I couldn't see my mother when they offered me some candy.

That's what this exercise is all about. Seeing if you can send and receive messages accurately.

Part I – Close-ups

1. In a large room, divide into groups of threes (triads) and call one person A, one B, and one C.

2. Have A and B sit about six feet apart with C as an observer.

3. A and B are to look intently at one another and then slowly move their chairs to within three feet of each other. Stop for a few seconds, and then move to within one foot or less of each other. Have A and B look at each other for at least one minute.

4. Have A and then B describe what they felt and observed as they moved closer. Then C can share some observations about the interaction.

Part II – Saying it Without Words

1. Now A and C are to sit facing each other with B as an observer.

2. A and C are given different lists which contain several attitudes to be communicated. B will be given copies of both lists (see sample lists on the following page).

3. A and C will alternately try to communicate the attitudes described on their lists. It would be helpful to give a sheet of paper to all three persons so they can take notes and record what they interpret from the non-verbal messages.

4. Only B will know what both A and C are attempting to communicate and B will take notes on A and C. It would also be interesting for B, the observer, to watch the **receiver** of the messages rather than the **sender**, to see what non-verbals they are unconsciously sending. In this case, it would be helpful if A and C did not know that B was observing the receiver.

5. After 5 or 10 minutes (depending upon how involved people are with the task), have A and B share their attitudes and lists, and compare the notes taken by all three persons.

6. Allow about 10 minutes to discuss the following questions:

   - *How accurately did A and C communicate the non-verbal messages?*
   - *How accurately did they receive the messages?*
   - *What problems did each have?*

If there is time and the triads have an interest in sharing what happened with other triads, put up a score care and see how accurately each of the small groups interpreted the messages. Encourage people to share what they learned from the exercise.

"LOOK POWER" TASK SHEET FOR PARTICIPANT "A"

(Copy this sheet for A and B)

You are at a regular meeting of your group or board. Try to communicate the following non-verbal messages to your partner (C) without any auditory sounds. (Take about 30 seconds for each of the following):

1. You're excited about the issue which is now being dealt with in the meeting.
2. You couldn't care less about what happened on this new issue.
3. You really want to get on to the next topic which interests you a great deal more.
4. You're upset with the way things are going in the meeting.
5. You have to go to the bathroom.
6. It's time for a break.
7. You're wondering why the chairperson doesn't stop talking and let someone else speak.

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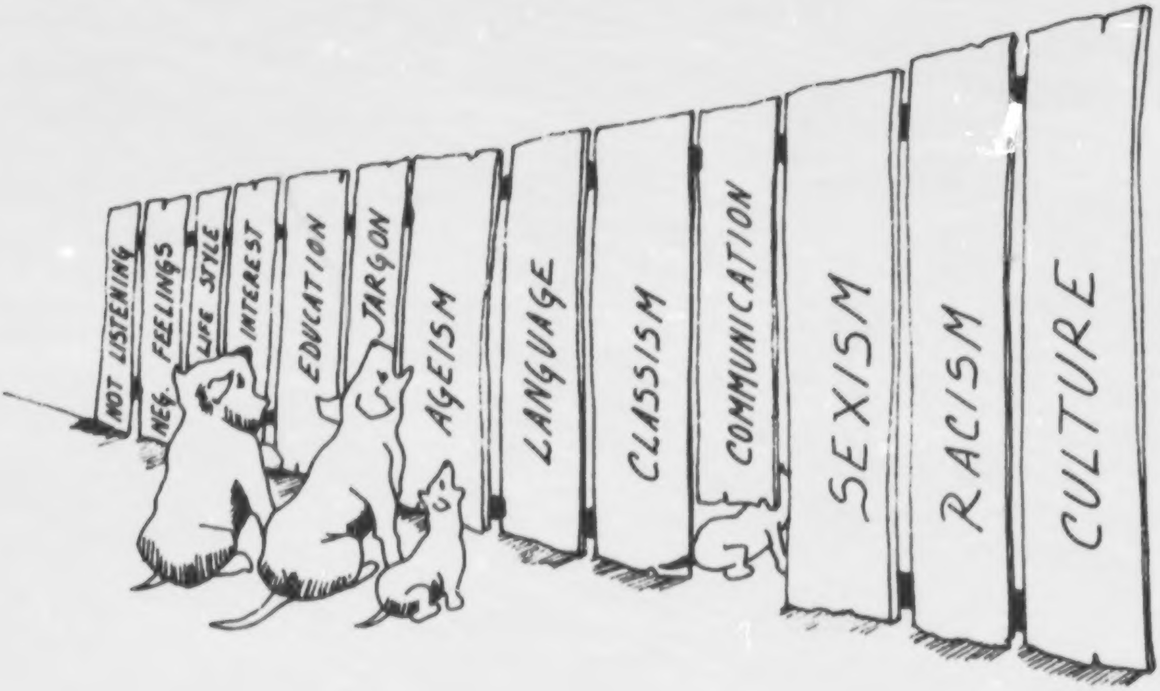
"LOOK POWER" TASK SHEET FOR PARTICIPANT C

(Copy this sheet for B and C)

You are at a regular meeting of your group or board. Try to communicate the following non-verbal messages to your partner (A) without making any auditory sounds. (Take about 30 seconds for each of the following):

1. Why doesn't the person next to you shut up so that you can hear what's going on in the meeting?
2. You agree with the point just made by **A** who is sitting across the table.
3. Your rushed dinner doesn't agree with your stomach.
4. You want to say something if there is time left.
5. You want very strongly to answer the person who just spoke, but you keep getting interrupted.
6. You want a stick of gum which someone else has in their pocket.
7. You're tired and you want to go home.


NOT LISTENING
NEG. FEELINGS
LIFE STYLE
INTEREST
EDUCATION
JARGON
AGEISM
LANGUAGE
CLASSISM
COMMUNICATION
SEXISM
RACISM
CULTURE

Bob Biagi

Blocks to Developing Trust and Effective Communication

Non-verbal and cross-cultural communication have been discussed because they relate directly to the development of trust within a group or board. Without trust among the membership, the group will most likely not be effective or satisfying. The following exercise joins the two concepts—trust and communication—and helps group members become aware of and talk about some of the **blocks** *which prevent members from communicating and trusting each other.*

Exercise:

BLOCKS TO DEVELOPING TRUST AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

This exercise has been used not only within specific groups, but also with mixed groups that didn't know each other. In one case it was used to help prepare community organizers who were about to begin their work in different communities. They used the exercise to share their past experiences and observations. Keep in mind as you read and use this material, that custom tailoring an exercise to suit your own needs can make a simple exercise a learning success, even with a sophisticated group.

1. Make copies of the list of **Blocks to Developing Trust and Effective Communication** which follows and hand them out to everyone, including the facilitator. Also, before the session, copy these directions on a large piece of newsprint so that everyone can see them.

2. Everyone should read through their copy of "Blocks" and then go back and check off the five items that appear to be the most serious to them.

3. Divide the whole group into subgroups of four or five people.

4. In the subgroups, each person should share her reasons for choosing the five "blocks" that were selected as the most serious for your group. (Be sure to allow at least 15 minutes and most likely more for this section. Be sure to have whoever facilitates check out the group to see if they are finished before you move on to the next section. Many times groups get so involved in this task that they may refuse to stop.)

5. Each person now has three minutes to recheck and change their list in light of the group discussion. (You may find that some of the subgroups have come to a consensus and will decide to vote as a block.)

6. Each person has five votes to cast for the "block" which they consider to be the most serious. Tally the vote and decide which five blocks the group has chosen as most serious.

7. Return to the subgroups (most people will most likely still be in their subgroups). Their task is to develop one or more helpful ways to overcome each of the five selected blocks to trust and communication. (Allow eight to 10 minutes, less if the people finish quickly.)

8. For a final round of sharing with the group as a whole, have someone record on newsprint the various ways which the group developed to overcome the selected blocks.

Poor communication and a lack of trust are often the result of a number of combined factors. The following is a list of some of those factors.

Please Check Five Items Which You Believe are the Most Serious BLOCKS to Communication and Trust Building. If you have others you wish to add to the list, please do so.

____1. Cultural differences exist between members.

____2. Professional differences exist between communicators.

____3. Communicators have different beliefs.

____4. The speaker does not agree with what is being said or the policy behind it.

____5. The speaker or listener is preoccupied.

____6. The speaker or listener have very different vocabularies and jargon.

____7. People are unintentionally unable to say what they mean.

____8. The speaker has little knowledge of the subject.

____9. Either person is inadequately prepared.

____10. There are economic, class differences between individuals.

____11. The listener is not interested.

____12. Status differences (staff/client, leader/member) exist between communicators.

____13. There are negative feelings between communicators.

____14. One person tends to always agree with everyone.

____15. Someone is unintentionally miscommunicating.

____16. There exists some sort of interference or distraction.

____17. Time pressures exist.

____18. A difficulty in communicating difficult concepts or ideas exists.

____19. The same words have different meanings to different group members.

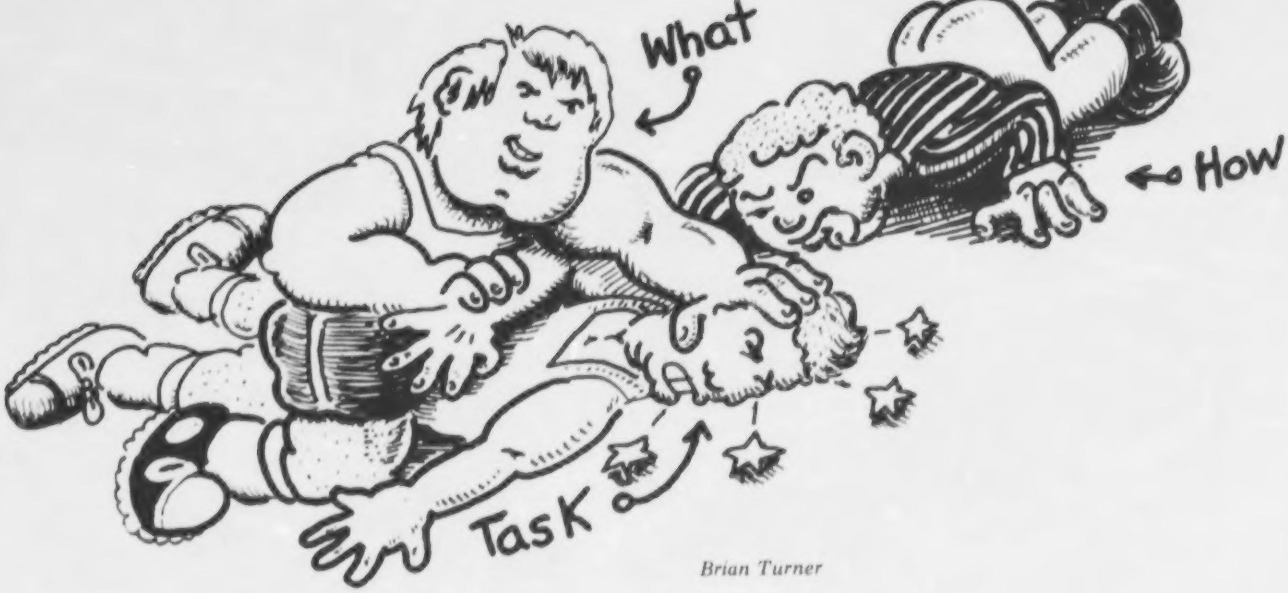
____20. Communicators belong to different ethnic groups.

____21. Differences in age exist between group members.

____22. Great differences in life experiences and educational background exist.

____23. People have different goals, objectives and agendas.

____24. ____________________ (Add any others)


What
How
Task

Brian Turner

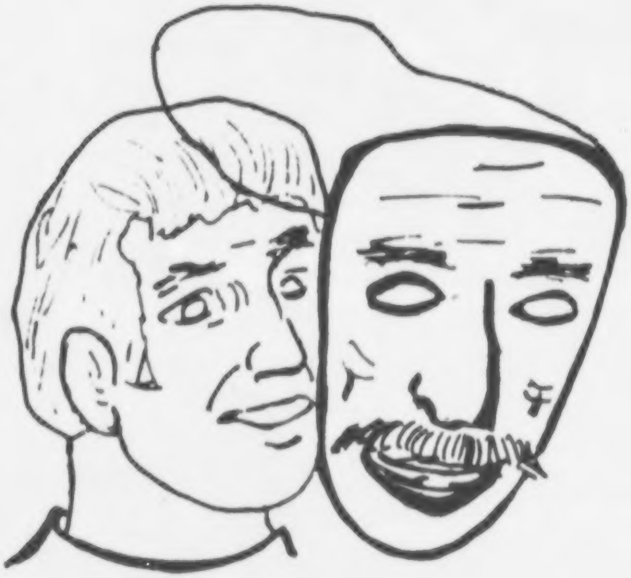
Chapter VI:

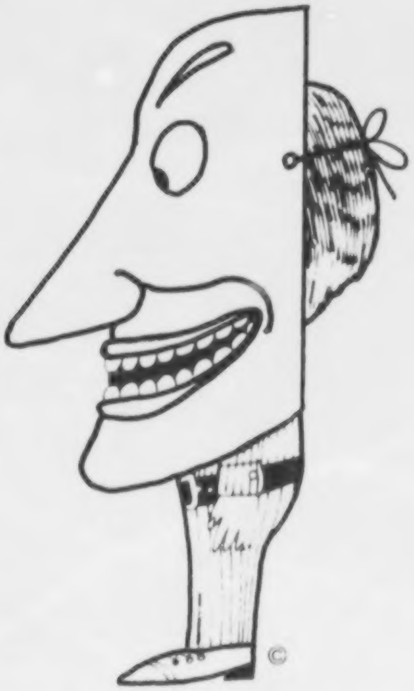
Observing How Your Group Does What It Does

Frequently the progress of a meeting can be aided by turning attention away from the topic at hand (which seems to be causing the difficulty) and focusing attention instead on how the discussion is being conducted (the "process").

Many times people in groups get so immersed in what they are doing that they are not aware of how they are doing it or the means they are using to accomplish their task or job. The American educational system and the job world tend to gear people to produce a task-oriented society which doesn't prepare individuals to be conscious of (or care about) the way things are done.

Many times we're not aware of our own behavior; we're so busy pushing paper that we don't realize we haven't communicated information clearly enough or we may be unknowingly encouraging a conflict.





A common example is the member who says nothing during a meeting. Other members usually make all sorts of assumptions about the quiet person such as: he is unconcerned, antagonistic, bored, above it all, stupid or in agreement with what's going on. People may feel that the silent person is not contributing what he could to the task or discussion, and this has the consequences of draining the effectiveness of the group.

An effective group member might simply ask the silent person what he thinks about the issue. This might clarify the person's position and bring him into the task or issue the group is addressing. In that way the process would be building for the task and not detracting from it.

Often, however, when "experts" come to observe a group and then consult with the leadership, whatever they say carries a great deal of weight. People have been taught to believe what the "expert" says, so they believe the observer down to the last period. It's sort of, "my expert, right or wrong."

While most experts take their lack of familiarity with the group into account, it's still difficult for many to cross the barriers of culture, economic class differences and political viewpoints present in many groups.

In any case, outside professionals cost money which most citizen groups don't have. Since most of us who are working in groups with other people must have a deep-down faith and optimism that the people can do what they set out to do, it pays (or rather saves) to put those beliefs into practice.

One way to do this is to do it yourself, by self-analysis. That is, you can use some or all of your group members as observers.

Members of your group may not be as experienced or as objective as an outside observer, but they do have many advantages. Foremost is that every person who acts as an observer becomes more aware of and sensitive to the group's process, and will probably become a better member for having done it.

A group's output depends many times on the attitudes and feelings of its members, and so it becomes important to ask yourself several times, "How are things going?" or "How are you doing?" Sometimes answers to these questions are easy, but many times they are not. Whether it is that members are unaware of what feelings and attitudes are in the group, or that there is an atmosphere of defensiveness, it is important for the group to monitor its own process.

Most times "do-it-yourself" observers will become more aware of the fine points of the group's process because they understand the underlying or "hidden agendas" (the real reasons members say what they say). A personal knowledge and understanding of the group will also help when it comes to present the observations made of the group, without the jargon of experts, in a way and at a level that it can be acted upon practically.

This point becomes most pertinent when you consider the number of years we have all been trained to respect the so-called "experts." Somehow they're supposed to know all the answers to everything and we accept what they tell us without much question. Yet in recent years, we see more and more that some of the old ways which were plain common sense, ecologically sound, and didn't cost anything, are being proven better and more healthy than what the "experts," advertisers and salespeople have led us to believe. (My grandfather brought organic gardening from the old country where it had been practiced for years. And my grandmother's herbal teas and remedies are now the "in" thing.) The point is, "experts" **haven't** always known all the answers—especially when it comes to groups. I believe that if you give people a few good tools to work with, they can develop their groups themselves.

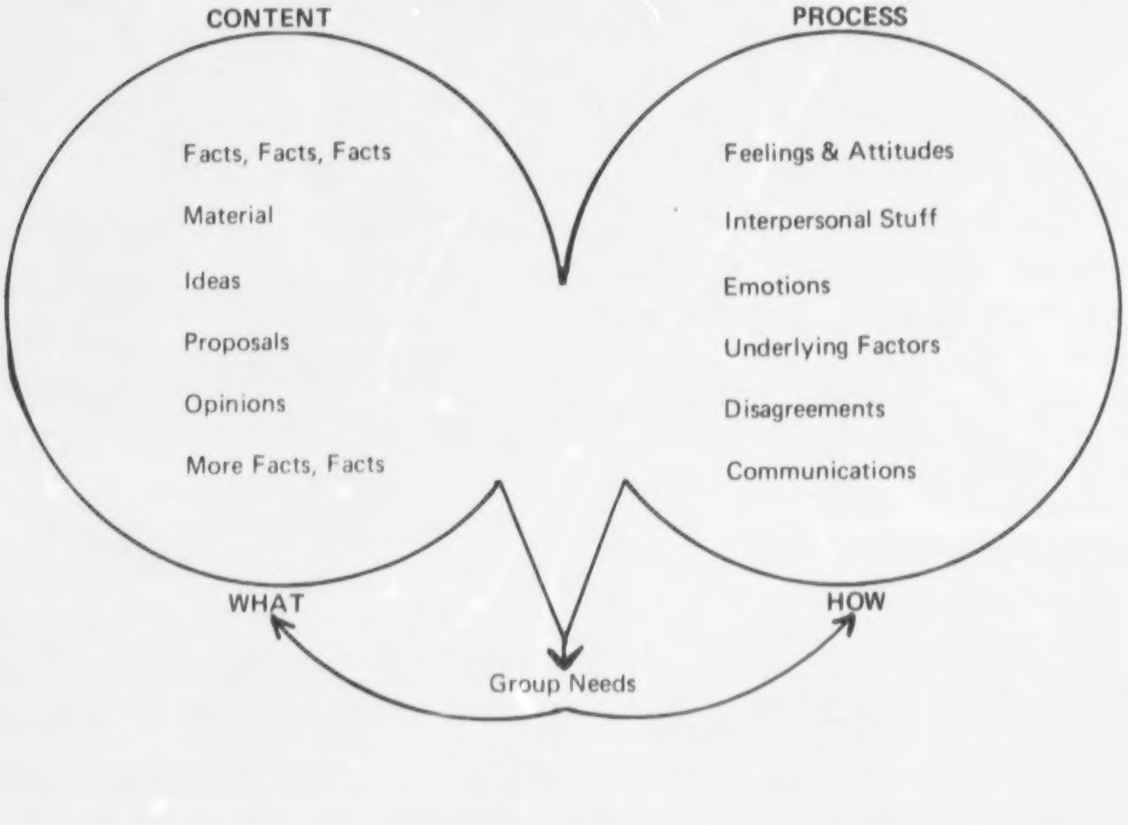
The exercises and materials which follow are some of those tools for your groups to use. If you think about them as you read them, you'll understand that they're mostly good old common sense. Reading and using some of this material will add to your group's "expertise" so that they will eventually devise custom-made tools as our grandparents did, and become their own "experts."

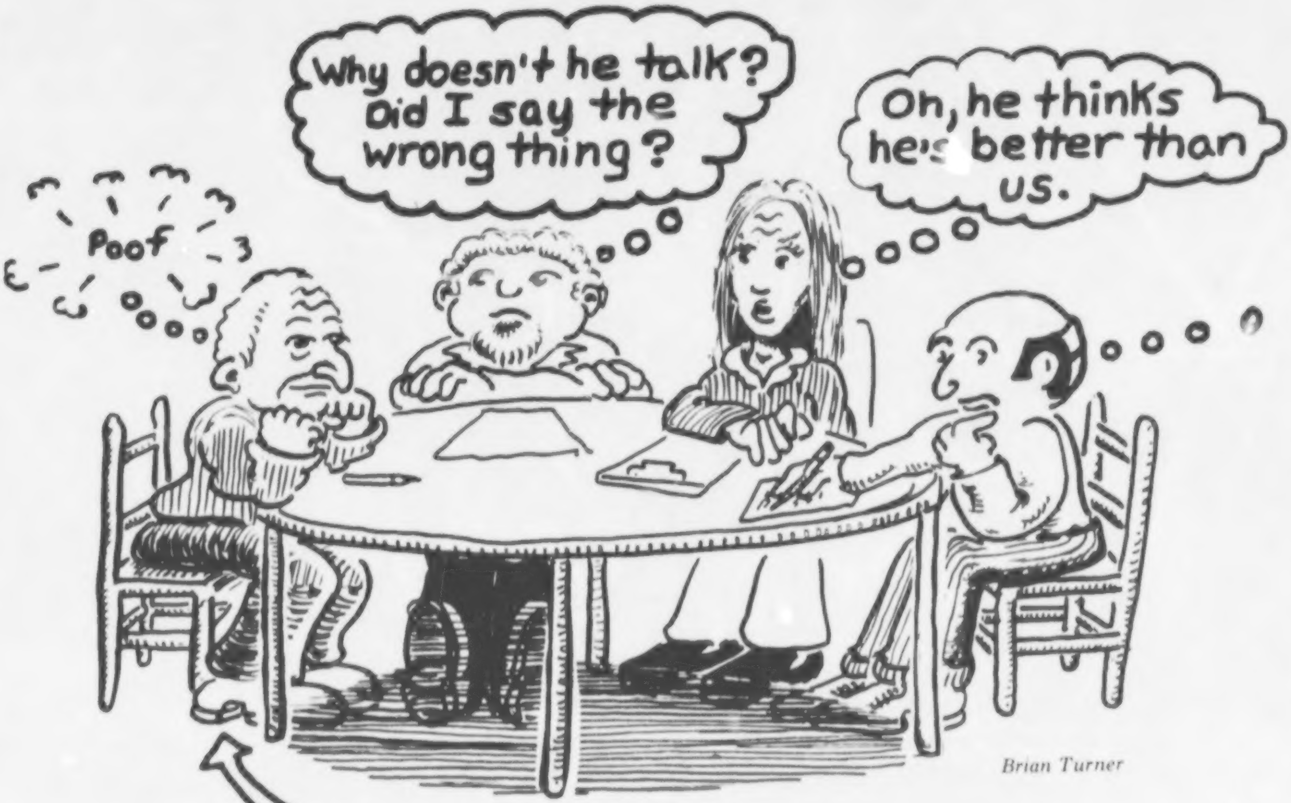
What Can We Look for When We Observe Our Group?

The theme that has been repeated throughout this manual is that there are two concurrent dynamics which run through the actions of any group or its members. I've called them the **WHAT** and the **HOW** or, as they're known to professionals, "Content" and "Process."

The What (Content) deals with the job or task at hand, the subject being dealt with by the group. This is usually where most of the attention of the group is focused. The "How" deals with what is going on between group members while they are working hard on the job or task at hand (dynamics such as power plays, stylistic differences, hidden agenda, group "unwritten rules" and feelings that go unresolved).

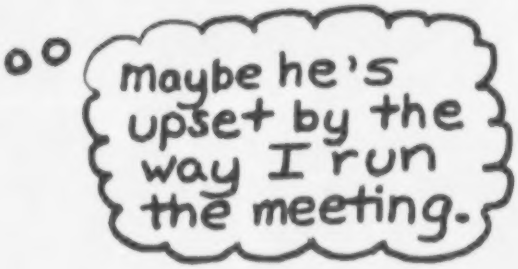
The following section deals with groups' meeting behavior—what and how things happen in a meeting. Since this is a **tool,** it is hoped that you will adapt this to your own group's needs to understand the many levels of what's going on in your group. Don't feel that you or others must look at all of these things at once. Take a few things and see what you can come up with, or divide the areas among a few people or even the whole group and have a discussion about them, either before or after a meeting.


CONTENT
PROCESS
Facts, Facts, Facts
Material
Ideas
Proposals
Opinions
More Facts, Facts
Feelings & Attitudes
Interpersonal Stuff
Emotions
Underlying Factors
Disagreements
Communications
WHAT
HOW
Group Needs


Poof
Why doesn't he talk? Did I say the wrong thing?
Oh, he thinks he's better than us.
Brian Turner

The Non-Talker

1. Looking at **participation** is one of the easiest ways to see how people are involved in the "How" or Process of the group. This means verbal participation, so look for who talks a lot and who talks very little. Are there changes during the meeting, with talkers becoming quiet and non-talkers doing much more talking? Look for the reasons that this might happen. How do talkers act towards non-talkers? What do other participants think the silence of the non-talkers means? Do they think they are agreeing, disagreeing, uninterested, or just intimidated?


maybe he's upset by the way I run the meeting.

An interesting thing to look for is which members talk to whom. This can be done simply by making a diagram of the meeting and drawing lines when one member talks to another.

Too many lines makes these diagrams confusing, but they can give a general impression of what is going on in the meeting. Many times participants don't realize what they are doing or not doing in meetings, or why that's so. Another type of participation to be aware of is who and what keeps the meeting moving and how. (Also, what does the absence of that person or dynamic do to the meeting?)

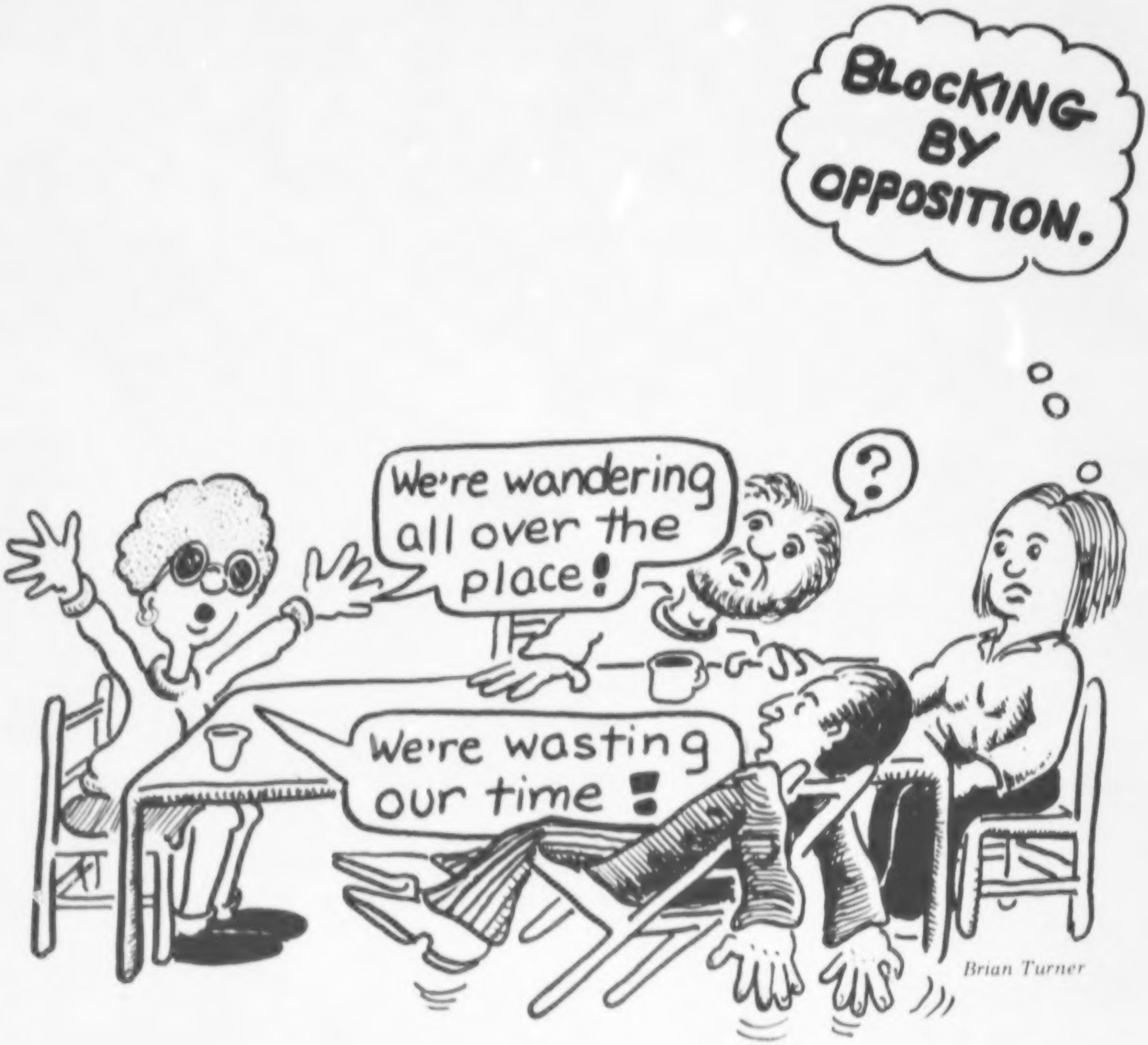
2. The next area to look for is who has **influence in the meeting.** This is very different from participation, for influence, or lack of it, is not expressed verbally. In some cases, it's those people who say very little that have a great affect on the meeting. Non-verbal actions in a meeting can do everything from making others feel comfortable and confident to making them feel like fighting, which can disrupt the meeting. On the other hand, those who think they have influence and talk too much may have very little influence because no one listens to them when they carry on. (This usually happens when someone has a personal agenda to get out that everyone has heard dozens of times in past meetings.)

So when you are observing the group, look for the people with the high influence (the ones who are listened to by others when they speak), as well as those with little influence. *Does influence change during the meeting or from meeting to meeting? Is there any competition between subgroups for influence, or individuals trying to gain a leadership position (or is it a case where no one really cares who leads)?* Be aware of the effect that this has on the group, for this can be a positive influence as well as a negative one.

The way that people **use** their influence is also very important. If influence is used to get cooperation and backing for a proposal, it can be positive. But many times, using, or trying to use influence can turn people off to an idea. Again, it's the "what" and the "how," for it may not be the idea or proposal that gets a negative response as much as it is the way (or how) a person presents an idea or proposal and tries to influence its outcome.

In observing your own group, is there someone who is pushing another to support a certain decision? (This may take some observing during a break or before and following the meeting.) How are people reacting? Are there any members who use their verbal or non-verbal influence to hamper or **block** a decision if it's not the one they support?

Or is there a person who states that, "We're wandering all over the place," or "We're wasting time," when others are still trying to express their opinion on a decision? Is there someone who makes an attempt to **support** the position of other members, even though there have been past differences or they don't fully agree now? *Are there persons who overdo this constantly, in order to hide all disagreement and conflict at any cost? Is there someone who is always giving away the right to make a personal decision on issues, or who does anything not to say something negative?*


BLOCKING BY OPPOSITION.
We're wandering all over the place!
?
We're wasting our time!
Brian Turner

It's also important to look for "good" members when you think about influence. Is there that democratic or collective type who is sincerely trying to get everyone's input so they don't feel left out of the discussion? *How do members of the group react to someone who is open, takes criticism easily and deals objectively with opposing points of view?*

3. One area that many groups overlook when analyzing their own process is how decisions are made and **the role of individual members in decision-making.** While there may be a written set of by-laws or a book of Robert's Rules sitting on the meeting table, many decisions may be made by your group without the group's awareness of how these decisions affect and are affected by individuals. There are three distinct type of decision-making processes: democratic, coercive and something that might be called "democratic-coercive." The latter is the difficult one to spot, it characterizes most group processes. Democratic-coercive happens when one or more individuals in a group manipulate a decision so that the group feels as if it has made the choice, when in reality it was set up and had no other choice.

It is important, then, to try to observe whether a dominant few tend to sway most decisions. Does the group tend to have its collective mind changed by the persuasive arguments of a certain few? Is it true that, "as so-and-so goes, so goes the group?" Or, is it even subtler than that—has the person who is advocating a certain decision "stacked the deck" in favor of the decision by leaving out certain pieces of information, or by presenting the information in an order which leads the group to a faulty (but persuasive) conclusion? *Do members freely question other members' positions? Do members have enough information to make a decision? Is the group taking one person's word for it?*

When it comes to decisions and resolutions, do certain members support other members, and does this support seem to decide the issue for the rest of the group? How does this coalition affect the rest of the group?

Does there seem to be a sort of oppression by the majority when it comes to decisions? Is someone always calling for a majority vote even when the minority objects? Or is there an honest attempt to reach consensus between the minority and majority despite what numbers dictate?

Bob Biagi

Are there certain individuals whose (or instances when) suggestions or motions are ignored? Are there those who not only make suggestions but also seek out alternative solutions and ideas from others to deal with the issues? Does someone ever try to summarize what the group has discussed, or does anyone ever ask for this?

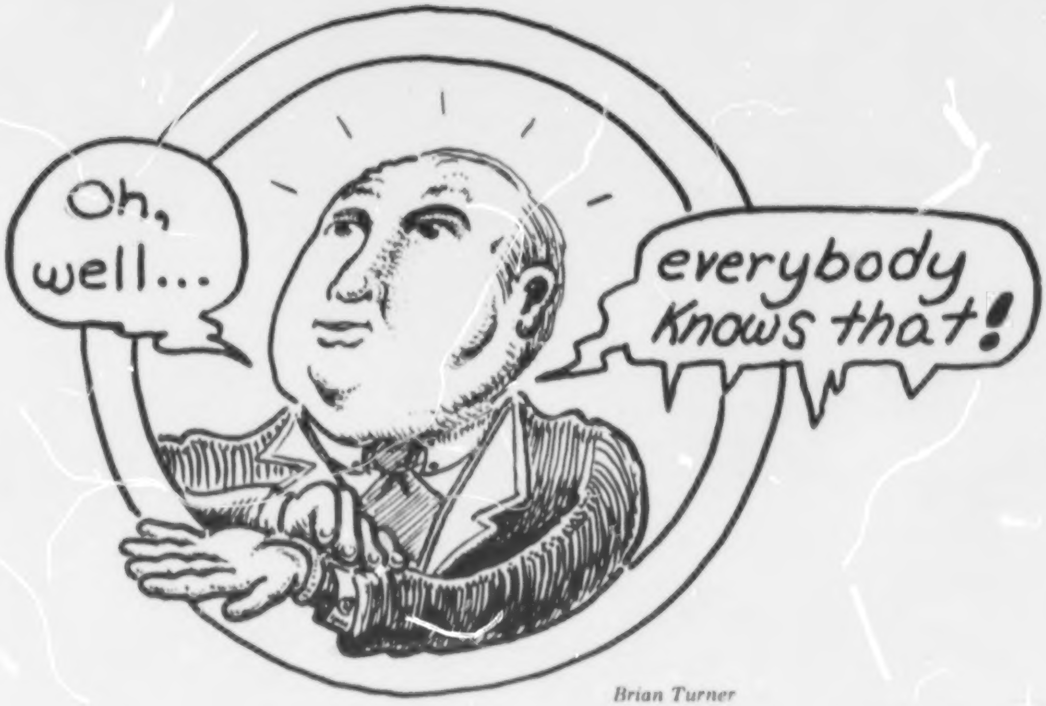
There are also those who manipulate decisions by not ever taking the matter up with the group—by making a decision alone, without consulting the rest of the membership (until, usually, it is too late to renege). Does this happen in your group? What happens to the rest of the group?

Another way to block decision-making is to constantly be bringing up new issues before a decision has been made about the one currently on the floor. Sometimes, of course, the group may find that it cannot make one decision without first reaching consensus on another issue. If so, has the group bought into the necessity of diverging (and has everyone agreed to the amount of time to be spent on the tangent, before going back to the issue at hand)? *Does the group ever get back to the original issue, or does it continue to wander from issue to issue without ever really coming to any decisions? Why does this happen? Are there certain individuals who keep diverting the group's focus? Is it intentional or unintentional? How does the group stay on its target—does someone stop the discussion from drifting to different issues? If someone does this, how is it accepted by the group?*

4. In order to maintain effective team work and a healthy group atmosphere where people can be happy and put out their best effort, everyone must have **input into the workings of the group** as well as the decisions. Members need to feel they are a part of what's going on. Be aware of members who try to encourage this by bringing others into discussions, or by checking out their opinions. Watch for those who are skillful at interrupting and cutting others off. Why are they doing this? See if ideas are being communicated and if members help this by asking questions or explaining points. Has everyone been heard from? Has everyone been **listened to**? Can the group summarize what certain individuals stances are? (Watch the snob routine

"Oh, everybody knows what that means," or the person who uses 50 cent words when nickel ones will do. What does that do to others in the group and their contribution to the group?)

How are ideas, suggestions, and proposals rejected or voted down? How does the person who presented those ideas feel at that point—do others act as though they have won a victory, or is there support for the person even though the ideas were **not accepted**? This, many times, can be an indication as to whether ideas will be brought up by the same person again, or even others who fear being put down hard themselves.


Oh, well...
everybody Knows that!

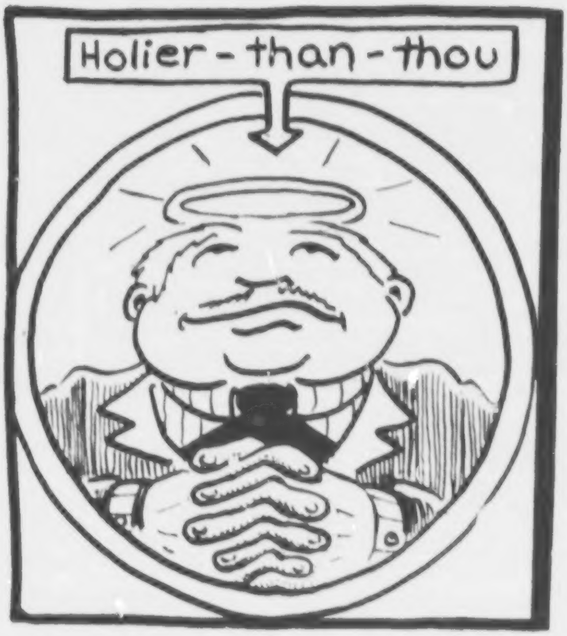
Brian Turner

5. There is something about the way a group acts while it is at work that can give an observer a general feeling or impression about the group and, in fact, an observer will usually be able to notice the **different kinds of atmosphere** that members prefer in the meetings. Some seem to prefer a light and friendly meeting and try everything to make it that way, while others are just as happy in a hot-and-heavy session that gets right down to brass tacks and wrestles with the problem at hand.

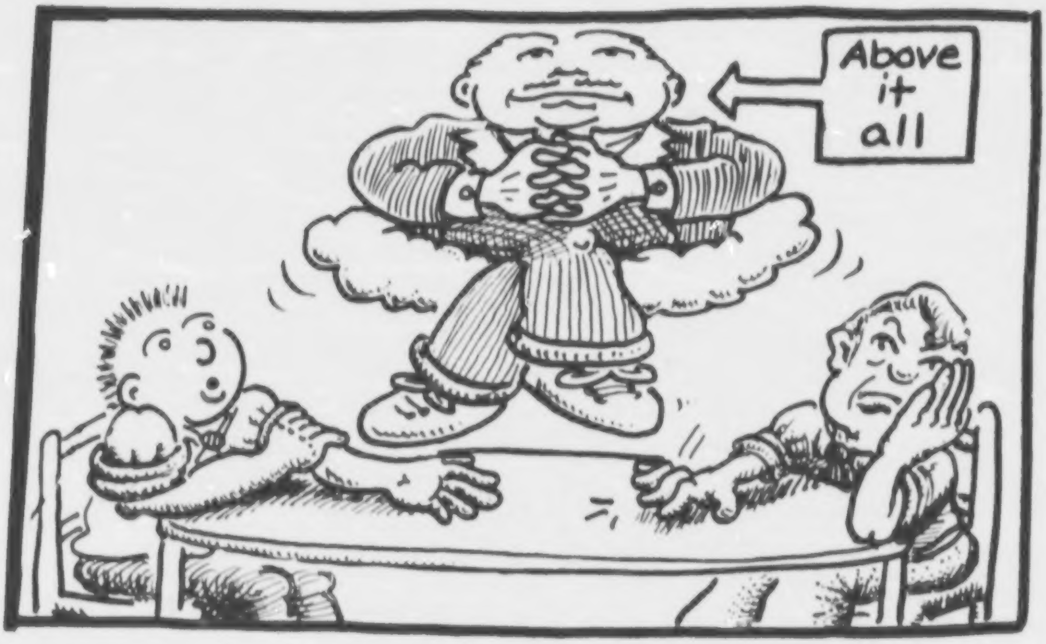
Try to get an overall impression of the general tone of the group: is it slow, light, frivolous, boring, plodding, violent, dramatic, demanding, dominated, regimented, bound by the chains of someone's parliamentary procedure, or flowing? General impressions are helpful and allow the group to become aware of how they are working together without pointing the finger at a particular individual.

6. Another element to watch is **how the group is divided.** Are there "in-groups" and "out-groups"? Do certain people stick together all or some of the time, or are there those people who are always on opposite sides (even when it comes to having tea or coffee)? Are there members who are boxed-out in some way, or really not a part of the action?

Many of these dynamics can be seen by observing the non-verbals. Do people move forward and backward in their chairs as topics change or even move their chairs in and out? Are there cliquish conversations being carried on when important issues are being decided? Are there people who are giving each other signals, or signs of approval/disapproval?



Brian Turner



Brian Turner

7. A final area that may be observed is the **unwritten rules which govern a group:** what are people allowed to do and what should they refrain from doing? There are usually two types of unwritten rules in a citizen group: social and political. Within each category there are those that everyone seems to know and follow and those that only certain people seem to follow. These can range from taboos and sanctions regarding sex-roles, language, religion, wealth and dress, to the way people should be addressed (Sir, Ms., Mr., man, buddy, brother/sister or first names).

Social rules are easily observable, while political rules and underlying assumptions take some time to identify. They may include things like which institution you may or may not support, or how personal you're allowed to get in a meeting. Most times groups are not aware of these things and it becomes a difficult problem for new members to deal with. There are many occasions when old members give conflicting signals to a new member and that person feels so uncomfortable that she never returns.

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To become aware of all the foregoing and to observe it in your group may appear to be an overwhelming task and it often turns a group away from watching itself. You can simplify this by taking each observable area one at a time, or give one area to a different person each week. Have that person become the observer for that week and have them make a short report to the group at the end of the meeting. Allow time for reactions and discussion.

Process Observation

You can go about the task of observing the situations which exist in your group on an informal basis or you can make it a part of your regular group meetings for a given period of time, as a sort of group development. Of course, group observation is more effective if the **whole group** is involved in monitoring itself, and the chances of bringing about awareness or change is higher if everyone takes part in watching the process unfold.

One way to observe the group formally is to appoint an observer for each meeting session (rotate this responsibility). The observer should not be involved in the actual meeting process (ideally), except to vote or (only when necessity dictates) voice an opinion. In the latter case, the observer should ask someone else to observe temporarily while she is involved in the discussion.

The observer should record her observations throughout the meeting (using the criteria on the previous pages, or the more formal checklist which follows). At the end of the meeting (or work session, or exercise) the observer then shares her notes with the rest of the group and leads the group into a discussion about those observations. If the group is large enough, it may be helpful to have more observers the first few times so that notes can be compared.

It should also be emphasized that observers are looking for the positive as well as the negative. This is important because many times it's easier to listen to and reinforce the behavior of a group as a whole, since it doesn't lay a blame on the individual (remember the saying about sugar being better than vinegar to catch a fly?).

The following guidelines may help process observers know what to look for. After a while you may want to add your own ideas about what to look for—problem areas which may be specific to your group.

Bob Biagi

Self-Observation Form

Use the following form to describe the type of actions exhibited during a meeting and the effects of those actions upon the rest of the group.

Task-Oriented Action

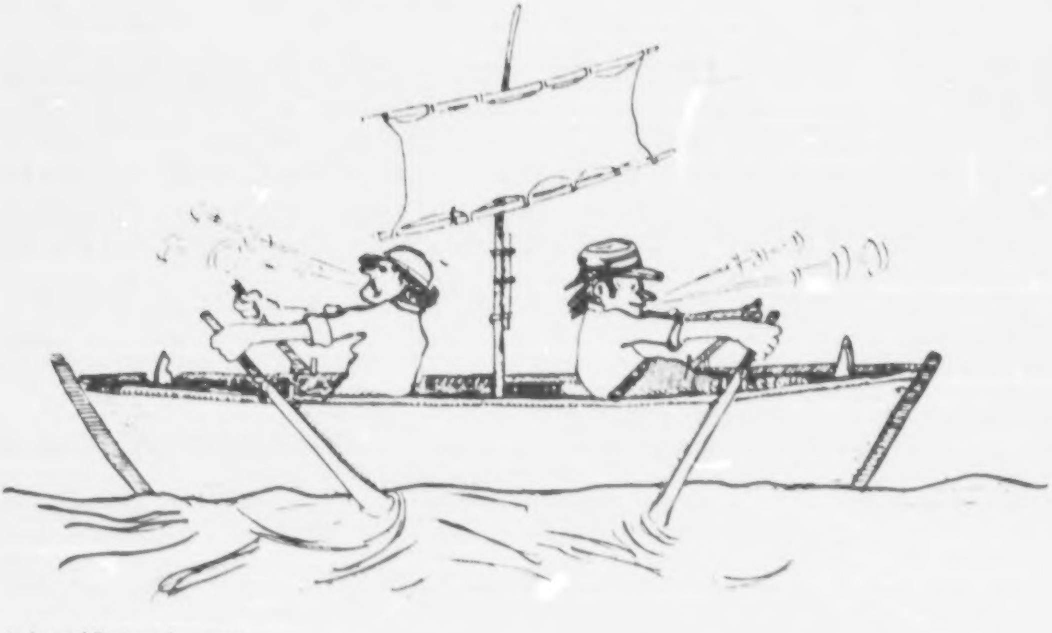
What are members doing which is aimed at getting the task or job done (such as: getting the ball rolling, keeping things moving, giving information, clearing things up, summarizing, checking to see if there is consensus)?

Who did it?	What did s/he do?	What were the effects?

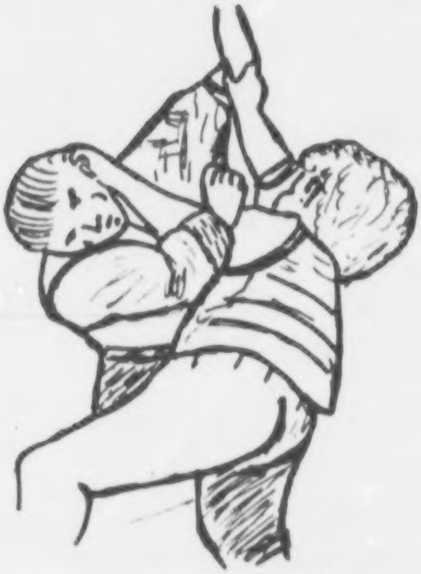
Maintenance-Oriented Action

What are members doing that is aimed at helping the group work together more effectively (such as: mediating disagreements, supporting others who say things, adding humor, harmonizing, compromising, testing to see if members are communicating)?

Who did it?	What did s/he do?	What were the effects?



Industrial Pioneer, June 1925



Bob Biagi

Self-Oriented Actions

What are members doing that seems oriented towards their own needs and not towards helping the group (such as: not listening, blocking, dominating, being aggressive, avoiding the issue, talking too much)?

Who did it?	What did s/he do?	What were the effects?

Exercise:

Stop Action Self-Observation Tool

This is a tool which can help a group view and record how the process of the meeting changes in relation to the subjects being dealt with at a particular time. While it is helpful to have one or more observers using the checksheet, it is most useful if every member gets a chance to participate. This can encourage members to apply what they are learning to a real situation.

1. This exercise is intended to be used four separate times during a meeting. This is an advantage because the observer can participate in the meeting most of the time and only observe for a few minutes at different times. The observer lists the topic under discussion each time in **Part I** so that the checksheet can be related to **what was happening as well as how it was happening.**

2. In **Part II**, the observer rates how the group as a whole is doing using a scale of one to 10 with one being super and 10 being unsatisfactory.

3. At the end of the agenda, a few minutes should be set aside for a short discussion of the results.

TOPIC BEING DISCUSSED

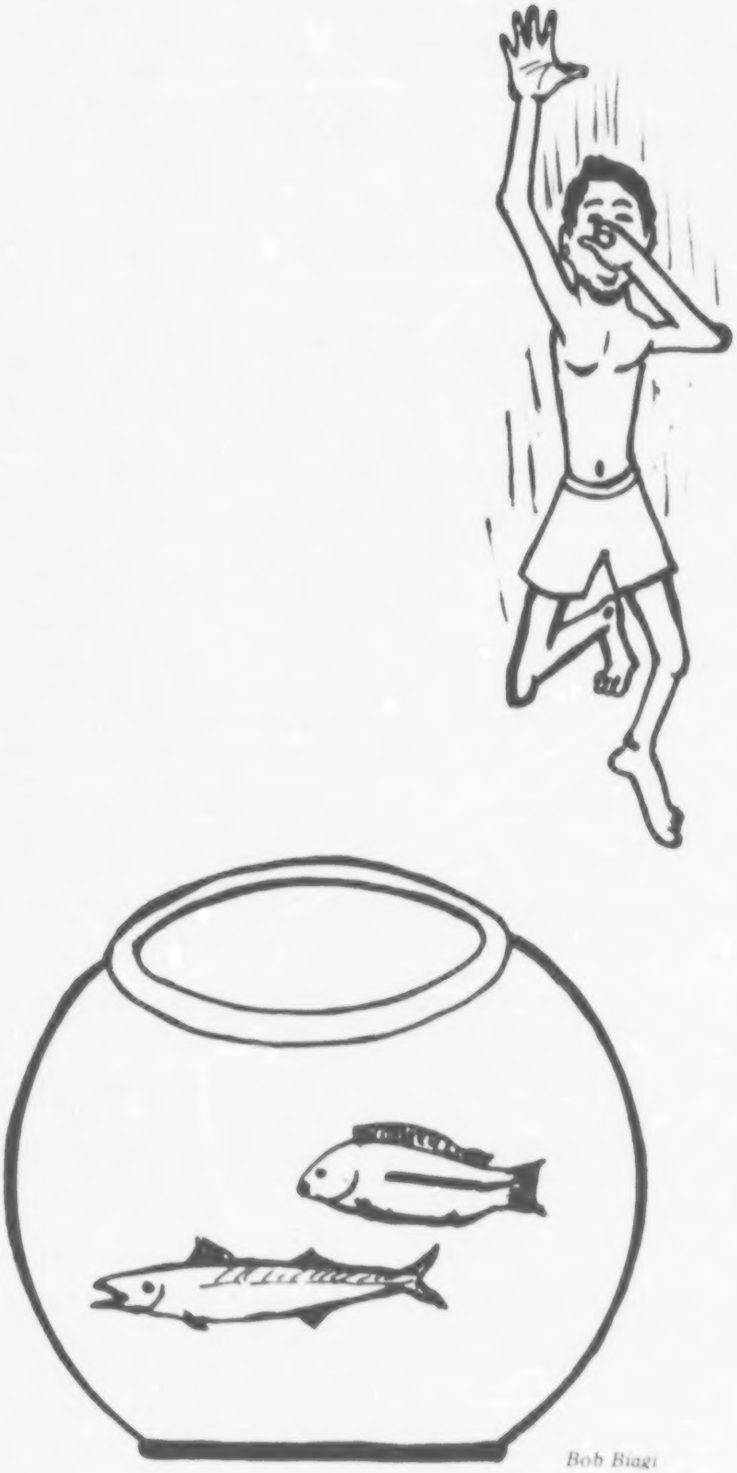
First Time:

Second Time:

Third Time:

Fourth Time:

OBSERVATION	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. The atmosphere is friendly, cooperative, and pleasant with new members easily incorporated into the discussion/activities.				
2. All members eagerly participate.				
3. The purpose of each task or topic is defined and kept in mind.				
4. Everyone communicates, not just a few.				
5. Everyone contributes and there is no fighting for status or hidden agendas.				
6. The group utilizes the resources of all rather than relying on a few.				
7. The members stay with the task and produce effectively.				
8. The group adjusts to changing needs and situations.				
9. The members feel safe in speaking out; neither ideas nor people are ridiculed or belittled.				
10. Interest is generally high.				
11. The meeting runs smoothly, without interruptions or blocking.				
12. Members all seem well-informed and up-to-date and understand what is going on at all times.				



Bob Biagi

THE FISH BOWL

If you don't have the time to try process observation in each meeting, you might want to devote a special meeting to this (or it may be a way of getting a reluctant group interested in looking at its meeting process over a longer period of time).

The following is an exercise your group can try to get a handle on the types of dynamics operating between group members. In my experience the Fish Bowl Technique is one of the most useful tools for helping to become aware of personal as well as group dynamics or process. In addition it can be a useful working tool during meetings (see Other Uses at the end of this section.).

Exercise:

The Fish Bowl Technique

1. Choose a facilitator/time keeper.

2. Ask the group members to divide into two equal groups. Counting off one or two is helpful because it helps to break up small groups.

3. Have group number 1 sit in a circle or around a table and hand out copies of one of the following: "Fish Bowl Task Sheets." Ask them to select one of the tasks and begin to do the task.

4. Call group number 2 (the observers) aside and hand out "The Fish Bowl Direction Sheet" and "Group Process Score Sheets." Have group number 2 read through the sheets quickly and then take a seat in a circle around group number 1. Thus half the group will be sitting in a circle in the center with the other half seated around them.

Each group number 2 observer selects one (or more) of the inner group number 1 to observe, and sits in a position where she can watch that member's face as he speaks. (They are asked not to speak to or disturb the inner group.)

5. Group number 1 is given 20 minutes to attempt to solve the task in any way it wishes.

The task sheets which follow contain two types of tasks or problems. The first are hypothetical tasks which deal with topics that very few people know much about. This makes for a safe situation where everyone is about equal. Many groups prefer a hypothetical situation to the real, simply because it is less threatening to hear feedback about the way various group members behaved if the task or problem was one in which people didn't have a lot of personal investment.

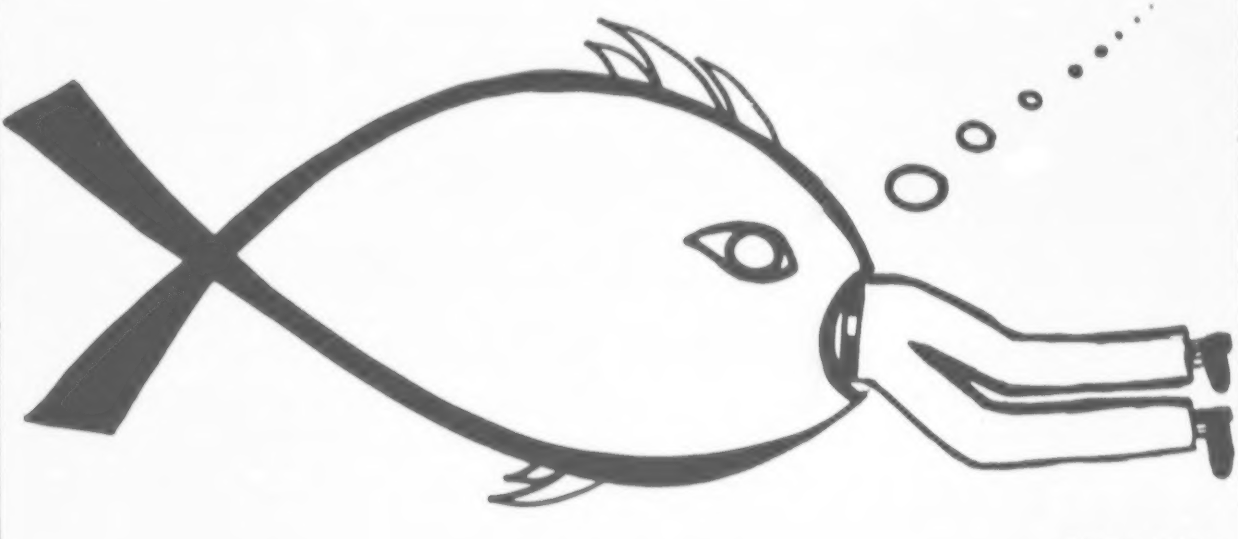
The second type of task or problems are very real. They are extracted from an actual workshop where these questions were tailored specifically to a particular group. They may be very useful for your group, yet they should be considered as a model. You are encouraged to tailor tasks or problems to your own group, whether they be short ones like the hypothetical ones or more complex like the real problems.

6. As the discussion proceeds, the observer group will keep score on the sheet each time the person (or persons) she is watching exhibits a behavior listed on the sheet.

7. When the task is accomplished or 20-25 minutes of discussion have elapsed, have each group change places. Thus group number 1 moves to the inner circle and group number 2 now becomes the observers.

8. Hand out the Group Process Score Sheet to each observer and explain what was happening while they were working on the task. The task of the new observers (group number 1) is to observe group number 2 using the score sheet. In addition, they are to be aware of what group number 2 is saying, but they are not permitted to speak or disturb the inner group (see the "Input Fishing Seat" which follows). At times it may help to hand out the score sheet to both groups in the beginning but since it usually has a great deal of influence on the inner group's behavior, I prefer to hand it out at this point.

9. The task of the inner group (number 2) is to discuss and share their observations of group number 1 using their score sheets and notes. If the members are very involved and constructive, let them talk for 15 or more minutes. Then allow the outer group a chance to interact and explain what they observed and what their responses are to the inner group. This can take from 10 minutes to an hour depending upon the tasks or problems and the interest of the group. (I have always used this as the last part of a workshop so that those who get very interested can continue the discussion on their own.)



Kolletta Kasper

Hypothetical Fish Bowl Task Sheet for Group Number 1

Prioritize the following tasks or problems then begin with your first priority and come to a consensus about the way you would solve it. You have 15 minutes to complete this task. If you finish before the time is up, go on to the next task or problem.

1. Design a power saw that can be successfully used in home carpentry and yet be safe enough for an eight-year-old to use.

2. Discuss the following statement: Autos with over 100 horsepower should be banned from American roads.

3. Your group has just been awarded $100,000 for civic improvement. Decide on the three priorities for spending the money and assign a percentage of the funds to each area.

(Use this sheet for notes.)

Bob Biagi

Real Fish Bowl Task Sheet for Group Number 1

Directions: Prioritize the following problems according to your own group's experience and needs. Then begin with your first priority and come to a consensus about the way you would solve it. You have 15 minutes to complete this task. If you finish before the time is up, go on to the next problem.

1. Bob is consistently late to staff meetings. Then when he does arrive he always seems to have something better to do than pay attention to the meeting. If he's not going for coffee, he's writing a letter or putting mink oil on his boots. Your problem is to help Bob accept some group responsibility and to motivate him to come to meetings on time.

2. Decide which rule, policy or method your task group feels should be changed or altered. Then come to a consensus on a practical way to do this so that it improves the project and helps you attain your goals (individually and collectively).

3. Greg is a member of your group. He feels that something must be wrong with him and your group; he's "frustrated" because all the other groups he knows about are far ahead of your group. Some have already held public meetings and gotten publicity in the newspapers. Greg would like to ask for help but he feels that there isn't a "supportive atmosphere to ask for help," and that "people aren't listening" anyway. Everyone seems to be so wrapped up in their "individual projects" and are "not concerned with" other groups "and group efforts as a whole."

Your problem is to help Greg become part of a group effort and help him improve his skills. Come to a consensus on a method by which this could be accomplished.

Directions for Group Process Score Sheet for Group Number 2

1. Choose either list "A," Maintenance Actions (the what), or list "B," Task Actions (the how).

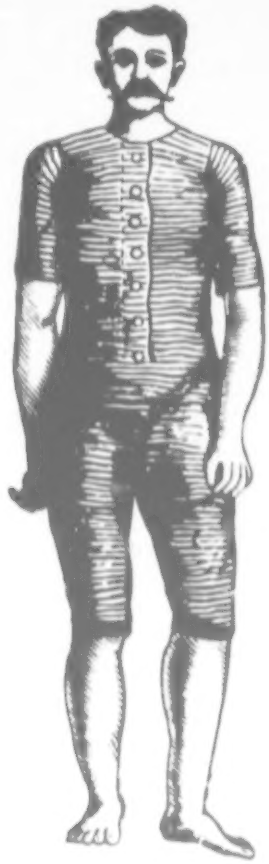
2. Sit around the fish bowl and try not to disturb the fish in the bowl as they perform their task. You will be given time to speak later.

3. Observe, and record on the score sheet the number of times each type of action is used by one (or more) person inside the fish bowl (individuals may wish to observe a few or even all of the people in group number 1).

4. In addition, the note sheet is provided here in order to help you take notes on your fish bowl person. It may be helpful to record what is going on on this sheet in relation to how it is being done on the fish bowl score sheet.

5. You will be asked to comment upon and discuss what you observe in terms of the task and maintenance score sheets.

(Use this space for notes on the fish you observe.)



Bob Biagi

A. Group Process Score Sheet for Group Number 2

Building actions that help groups to stick together:

Maintenance Actions	Group Members					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. **Encouraging**- being friendly, warm and responsive.						
2. **Non-Verbal and verbal** approval or acceptance by expression.						
3. **Harmonizing**—attempts to reduce tension and work out disagreements.						
4. **Compromising**—easing tension, admitting error, changing proposals to help the group.						
5. **Helping**—to keep communication channels open, helping others to participate.						
6. **Testing**—to see if group members are satisfied with the way they're working, the procedures they've set up.						
7. **Sensing and expressing** group feelings and moods.						
8. **Sharing**—personal feelings with other members, getting others to express their feelings.						

5. Group Process Score Sheet for Group No. 2

Building actions that help groups get their tasks done:

Task Actions	Group Members					
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
1. **Starting/initiating/proposing** task and suggesting ideas.						
2. **Giving/offering** information, facts, ideas, opinions, alternatives.						
3. **Seeking/asking/looking for** facts, opinions, and ideas.						
4. **Interpreting/explaining/defining** the problem, ideas, suggestions, terms.						
5. **Summarizing**: pulling it all together.						
6. **Offering a decision or conclusion** for the group to accept or reject.						
7. **Consensus testing**: checking to see if a decision or conclusion is possible.						

The Input Fishing Seat

This is an excellent device especially when you are using a real task or problem. When forming the inner fish bowl, leave one chair empty.

Members from the observer group are permitted to use this chair as a safety valve when they feel they will explode if they don't say what's on their mind or clarify a point. The observer is permitted to stay only long enough to present her input and then must return to her seat. No observer is permitted to become part of the inner group and this must be enforced by the facilitator.

The addition of this extra seat (or two) can make for quite a lively fish bowl exercise, so be ready for it. In fact one of the actual "real" tasks which follow got the situation so active that the inner group turned the "input" seat over and refused to allow observers to continue speaking.

Negatives

As you may have noticed already, the "Fish Bowl Score Sheet" does not include any negative categories. This is done puposefully in order to make the exercise as little threatening as possible. It's difficult enough for some people to get in front of observers and do anything, and this helps make it easier. The idea is to learn something and be constructive. The negatives are reserved for individual members to deal with themselves in the exercise which follow "My Role in the Group."

Other Fishing Methods

- **Real Problems:** Use the fish bowl to solve a problem without using any score sheets. In this case have the observers keep notes but don't allow them to speak until the time is up and they exchange places. (Use with or without the input sheet.)

- **Setting up the Sides:** Deal with a real problem or issue and put those members who always get their say (the in-group, the hierarchy, the "leaders," the staff) as the observers. This allows those who talk less or never have input to deal with the issue without interruption.

- **Mixed Groups:** The fish bowl can be used to facilitate a meeting between two groups where a problem exists, or when the group needs to share information or work more closely. In this case the inner group is made up of representatives and each group has an "input seat." The observer group must be permitted to have their input after 20 minutes or so, or else they will end up very frustrated.

- **Deep Sea Fishing:** The fish bowl can be used in a large organization to share information from a committee especially when the committee disagrees and a larger group needs to make a decision.

- **Try It, You'll Like It:** Try the fish bowl any time a larger group desires the efficiency of a small group while still keeping everyone involved and informed.

Bob Biagi

Exercise:

The Fishing Negatives

Sometimes it is useful for a group to experience—in a non-threatening manner—the negative roles that can surface in a group's meetings. The following exercise uses caricatures of different negative roles to create a role play meeting in which nothing is done right.

1. Format is same as other fish bowls. Inner circle will perform the role play and the outer circle will be observers.

2. In a separate room, give out roles form 'role sheet' to inner group. You may want to choose roles that describe certain common behaviors found in your group, or you may want to avoid playing a particular role if it will be too offensive to someone in the group.

3. Observers are given an 'observation sheet' to fill out while watching the role play. Their task is to guess who is playing which role.

4. The inner group is given a situation to act out. The role play should last approximately 15 minutes, be flexible.

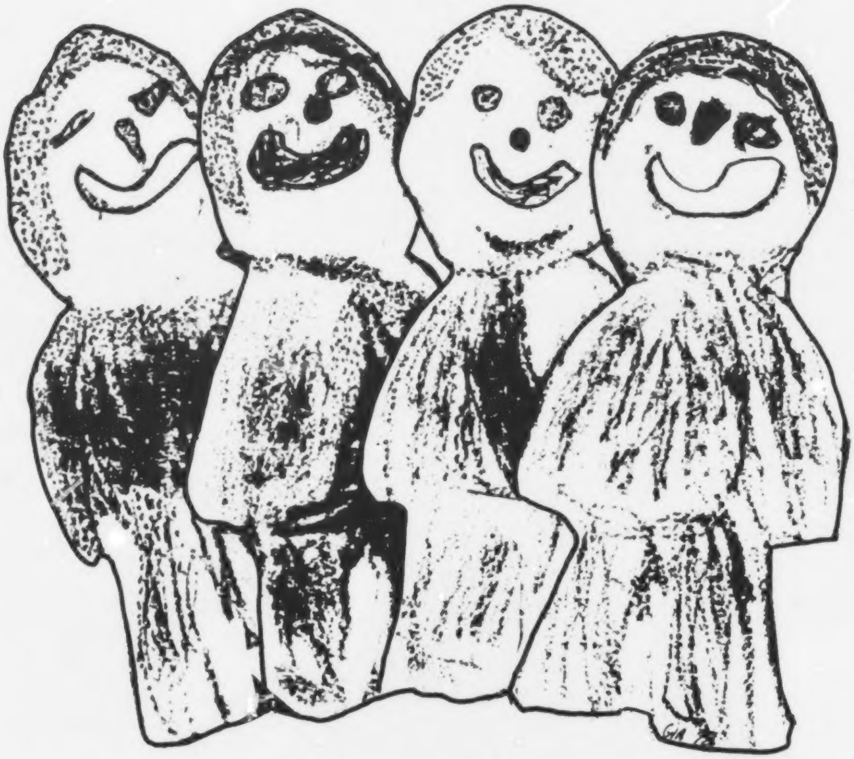
5. Suggested topics:
    a. Your committee has been given $1,000,000 for a pilot project to improve citizen participation in government bureaucracies. How ill you spend it?
    b. Others: see 'hypothetical fish bowl task sheet' on page

6. After the role play, facilitator leads a discussion by first having the observers guess who played which role. Suggested questions: How do these roles hinder group process? What could the facilitator do to make the meeting more productive?

Role	Description
Say it later Sam	Says very little during entire meeting, doesn't want to commit himself. Then, at the end of the meeting, expresses displeasure at decisions made and/or process used.
Jump the Gun Jenny	Always wants to move on to the next item. Assumes that everyone in the group understands the problem at hand and is in agreement. In actuality, people are saying different things and others are silent.
Stop the Show Seth	A very likeable, but excitable fella. Constantly interrupts with well-meaning suggestions. Likes to finish other people's sentences for them.
Play it again, Ben	Likes to summerize what people are saying. Unfortunately, his interpretation of what has been said is often a far cry from what actually was said.
Dafney Dodger	Instead of trying to resolve conflict, she tries to make it go away by ignoring it. Disagreements are driven underground and left to smolder.
Rambling Rose	On and on, on and on. Very active train of thought that needs to be derailed! Bureaucracies are one of her favorite subjects.
Harry the Axgrinder	Thinks that gov't. bureaucracies are responsible for the decline of Western society. Wants to make sure everyone on the committee is made aware of this distressing situation.
Historical Hilda	Has a strong sense of the past. Is fond of saying "That's been tried before and it didn't work." Little hope for the future.
Tall Tale Tim	Great storyteller. Has a million of them and they get better every-time. He sees this committee as a handy audience.
Peter Punster	The world is a joke, so why take anything seriously? Sees great comedy in every situation. Frequently sarcastic.
Delay of game Ginny	Once spent two hours picking out a touthbrush at the market. Likes to avoid action by setting aside items for further study. Constantly feels like 'we don't have enough information to do anything.'
Bob Benign	Has been appointed facilitator for this committee. Very laid-back, likes to meditate during meetings. Thinks the group should work out its own problems, doesn't want to appear directive.

Committee for Honest Action, Organization, and Structure (CHAOS)

Character Role	Who Played?	What was done?
Say it later Sam		
Jump the Gun Jenny		
Stop the Show Seth		
Play it again, Ben		
Dafney Dodger		
Rambling Rose		
Harry the Axgrinder		
Historical Hilda		
Tall Tale Tim		
Peter Punster		
Delay of game Ginny		
Bob Benign		



Gia Biagi

Exercise:
My Role in the Group

This is an excellent take-home exercise which could be given out following a fish bowl workshop.

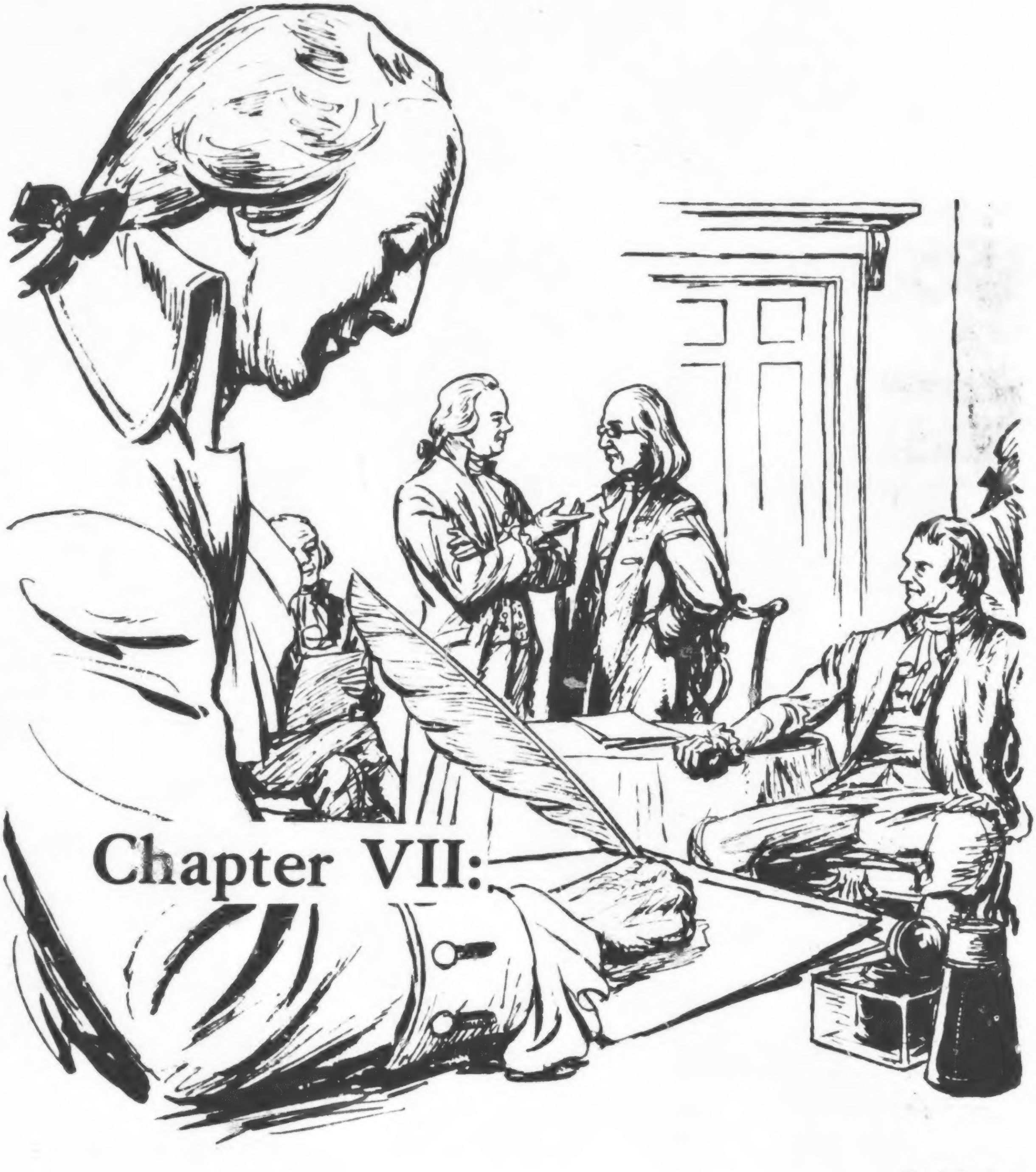
Simply give one or more copies to each member to fill out, by and for themselves. The sheet is keyed to the fish bowl task sheet but goes a step further. Included in this exercise are some of the Blocking Actions *that people take during a meeting as well as the building actions mentioned in the fish bowl. You may wish to add some of your own or ones taken from the section on Process Observation.*

1. Ask members to fill out the questionnaire at the end of the next meeting so they might be able to get a better idea of the actual role they play in a meeting and why.
2. The questionnaires can be collected without names and read at the close of a meeting or used as discussion initiators at the start of a meeting. It also works well as a personal exercise.
3. It helps to follow up with additional copies at the beginning of the next few meetings.

My Role in the Group

	Roles I Filled Today	Why I Filled This Role	Roles I Would Like to Fill	Roles I Filled Least Well	Roles I Should Avoid
Task Actions 1. Encouraging					
2. Non-Verbal Acceptance					
3. Harmonizing					
4. Compromising					
5. Helping					
6. Testing					
7. Sensing					
8. Sharing					
Maintenance Actions					
1. Starting					
2. Giving					
3. Seeking					
4. Interpreting					
5. Summarizing					
6. Offering					
7. Consensus Testing					

Self-Actions 1. Blocking					
2. Silence					
3. Recognition Seeking					
4. Dominating					
5. Talking Too Much					
6. Bored					
7. Special Interest—Hidden Agenda					
8. Not Listening					



The Laborer

Chapter VII:

Consensus Decision-Making

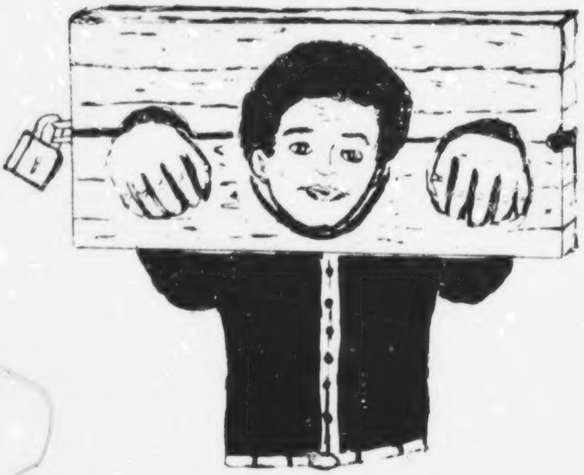
What I've done here is to take some models of non-parliamentary decision-making or problem-solving styles and work them into a combined piece that folks in most community groups will be able to utilize. The models came from a) **A New Look At Parliamentary Procedure In Community Groups,** by Sheldon G. Lowry and John S. Holik, written for the Cooperative Extension Service; **Techniques for Organizational Effectiveness** written by Claire Fulcher and Mary Gref for the American Association of University Women; and **Seabrook '78: A Handbook for the Occupation/Restoration,** written for the Clamshell Alliance Occupation at Seabrook. Each of these pieces is highly recommended in themselves. The reason for including a combination of models is to make them available to readers of this manual who might not have access to the other publications.

Many groups that I have worked with have expressed or implied that one of their basic problems is making decisions and sticking to them. Sometimes this is expressed by denouncing leaders or members as dictators and pushy, or complacent and apathetic. While this may be true in some instances, usually the problem lies in the process or the way decisions are made.

Many groups are locked into using the traditional "parliamentary procedures" made up usually of some adapted form of Robert's Rules. These may be strictly adhered to, but most times, members of the boards or councils and other community groups know only a few of the basics and use them religiously. Yet, those members who do have a good grasp of procedures can control the meetings which adds to the powerlessness of others.

Group members who place a great deal of emphasis on how meetings can be run democratically become very frustrated. They express the point that "if only we had someone who knew the 'rules' better and stuck to them," the meetings would run smoother and everyone would go home feeling good about and committed to the decisions the group has made.

Since making and carrying out decisions dealing with the group's agenda is what groups are all about, another look needs to be taken at how this process is accomplished. The problem is not the lack of understanding of Robert's Rules, or the need to stick to them, the problem is the rules themselves and the educational process which convinced us of their validity and necessity.



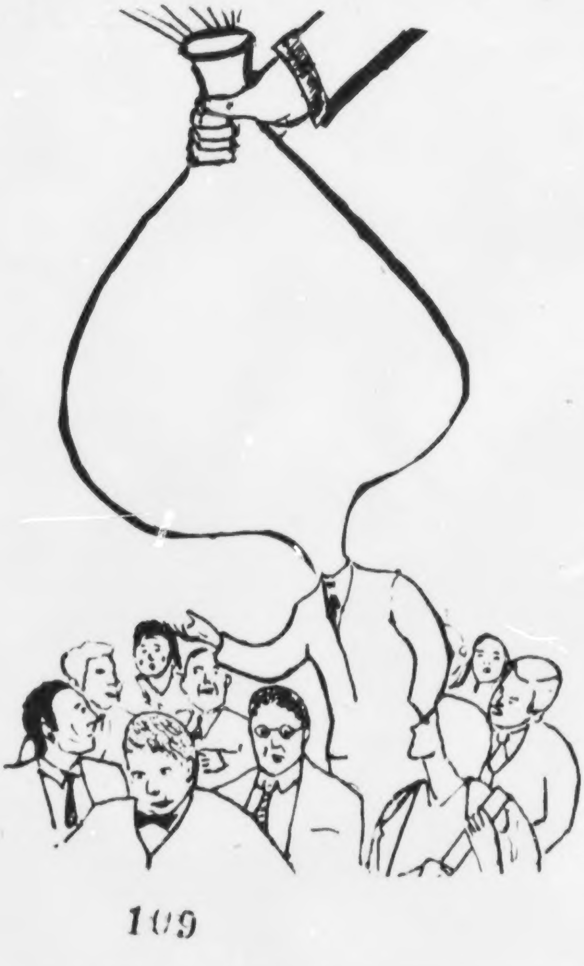
Bob Biagi

What has become apparent is that most of the issues and agendas of groups are not made up of legislative matters, but deal instead with problem-solving. And while Robert's Rules have given us tools for maintaining an orderly meeting, they are far from the best ways that have been developed to deal with problem-solving and decision-making.

In my experience, meetings run using Robert's Rules placed the power in the hands of those who knew how to use the rules for their own ends. Consider, for instance, why the positions of President of the Senate, Speaker of the House and Chairmen of Committees in the state and federal government are so desirable. They are very powerful positions which use as one of their tools of power "parliamentary procedure." Using parliamentary procedure, these persons can control a good deal of the direction to be taken by their respective legislative bodies.

Have you ever seen people storm out of a session or disrupted out of pure frustration with the process? In a sense, it's very unnatural to deal with problems—all problems—in a parliamentary fashion. Think about all of the decisions we make every day when solving problems with other people. If every time you proposed something it had to be in the form of a "motion" or "point of order" and then seconded, things would get quite boring and one-sided. It's sort of like the opposite of the discussion in earlier chapters dealing with the "What" and the "How." This is the point where parliamentarians become very concerned about the process—the way you do what you do—the rules. And whereas the concern for process earlier was to eliminate blocks to communication and participation, the rules of parliamentary procedure actually become blocks. In fact, instead of creating an open and trusting atmosphere, one of formality predominates and becomes the tactic encouraging control.

Groups function much better and are more efficient and productive in a friendly environment than in a formal one which emphasizes the importance of the person "running the meeting."



Bob Biagi

Bob Biagi

The Rules

Adding more rules than are necessary block input rather than allowing everyone a chance to speak.

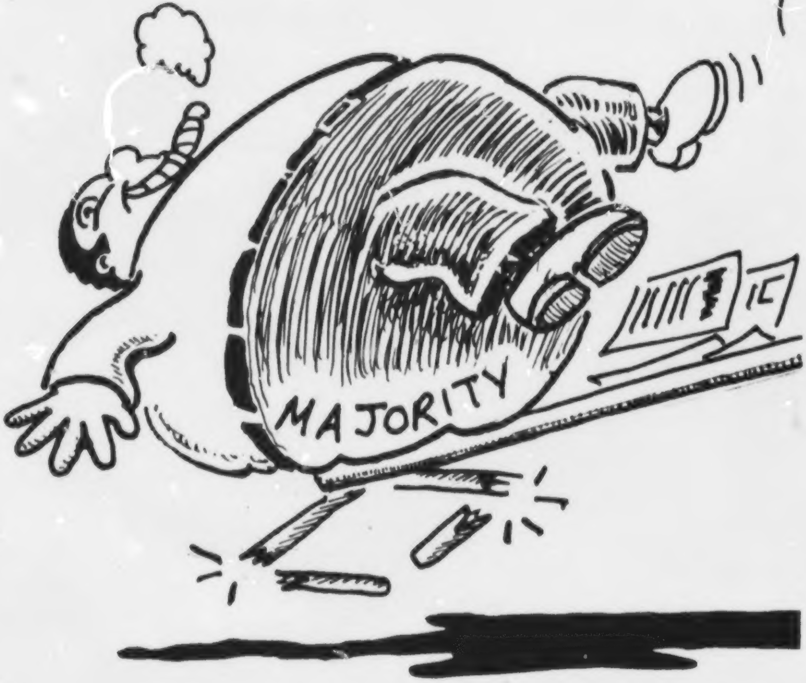
In Lowery and Holik's useful pamphlet they delineate some significant problems groups encounter when trying to use parliamentary procedure. We've probably all experienced the process of presenting a motion and then discussing it as General Robert's Rules dictate (he was a General). This very process has been found to block creative solutions to problems and promotes disagreement.

It forces a group, many times during the course of a meeting, to propose a decision, action or solution before people have discussed the problem or the facts that deal with it. Thus, the attention of the group focuses on the motion or solution and not the problem.

Other ways of solving the problem are not usually presented and attention becomes directed towards a narrow discussion of the merits of the motion—out of context. Then, members find themselves locked into a position before they have a chance to think about alternative strategies to solving a problem.

This "solution-first" type of problem-solving promotes a yes or no position which blocks the development of creative problem-solving for the whole group. If someone wants to change the motion by adding amendments, it's a hassle, and if they want to present an alternative solution, it must wait till the first motion is defeated.

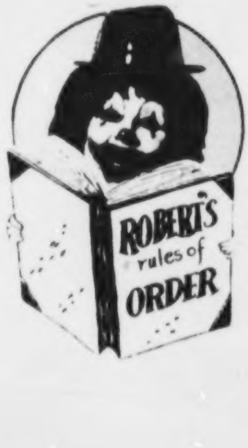
Rather than following the long drawn out procedure, it would be better to follow a simple problem-solving model of defining the problem, gathering all possible solutions, and choosing the best one. If this is too threatening for your group to allow, simply suggest that the motions be made at the end of a discussion on an issue or problem where it logically belongs. It then becomes a cooperative effort in which everyone has a hand in putting the motion together and will most likely be committed to the decision. This also allows members to change their opinions as more information is shared and compromises are worked out.

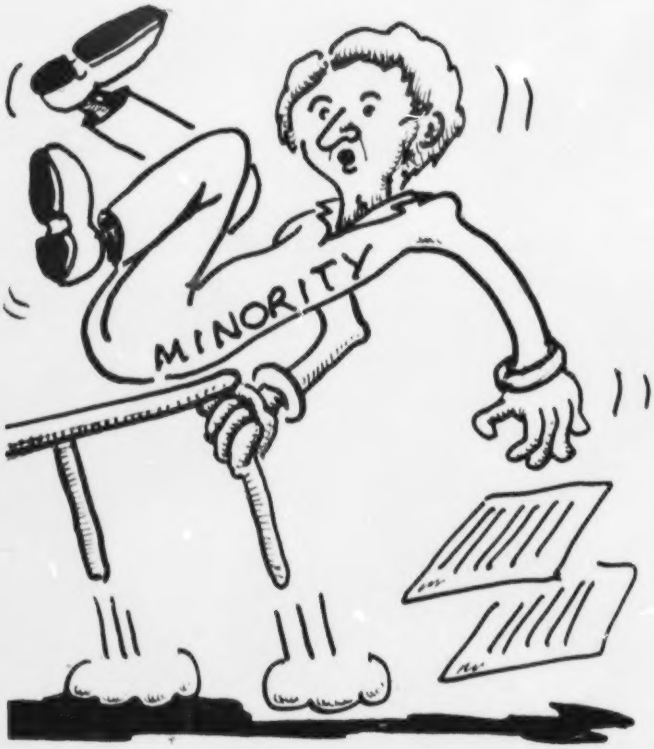


Another area of concern is the effect of voting on a group. While there are times when voting is a most useful and necessary tool, it also becomes a blocking rather than a building force when trying to reach total group agreement, consensus and commitment. If voting, in members' minds, is the only way that issues can be settled, this automatically builds in two sides, the yea and the nay, of an issue. This means that there is a win/lose situation in which someone must lose—leaving possibly some bad feelings and a negative attitude toward the decisions. And since most groups follow the old "Majority Rule" of 51% of the vote wins, this also means that it's very possible to have almost one-half of a group opposed to a decision, thus feeling very little commmitment to carry it through. It may not reach the 49% level, but 30-40% is not an uncommon figure.

How many times have you heard, "*You* made the decision, not *me,* I voted *against* it."

If you want to have a group carry out decisions effectively, everyone must be in on formulating the decision and agreeing to a great extent with it.





Brian Turner

Consensus Decision-Making: What It Is

The use of consensus decision-making/problem-solving is a process that can be followed strictly or loosely depending upon your group and its needs. Success in using this method depends on people understanding it and their desire to use it. Consensus, like other topics in this manual, is something that can be used in all phases and activities of your group. It's a way of working together. In addition to the problem-solving method, it echoes a theme which should run through all groups—that of people having control over the decisions that affect them. This is what consensus attempts to achieve.

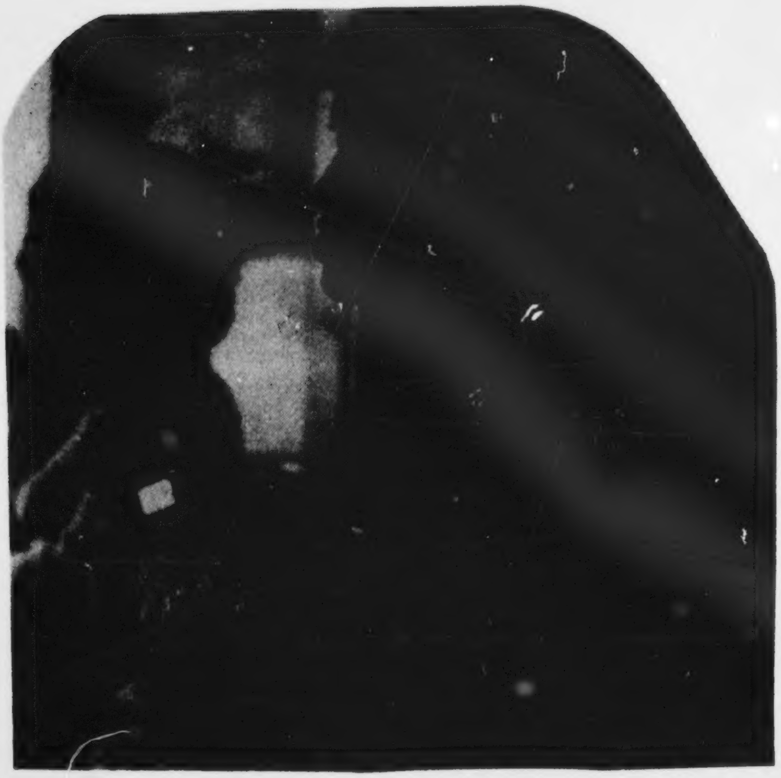
Consensus does not necessarily mean unanimity, where everyone is of one mind and in full agreement with a decision, although it may. Consensus happens more as a synthesis of ideas rather than one side winning. A unanimous decision is not the goal, but instead it aims at facilitating the expression of input and views from every member of the group.

In so doing, people feel that they have had a fair chance to be heard and that they have communicated with the group. Thus every member should be able to accept the decision of the group based on logic and practicality. If this is not so, then one person can foreseeably block the decision of the rest of the group. For, in consensus decision-making, the group can take no action that is not consented to by all members. In reality, what happens is that members use this right very sparingly.

Usually, someone who disagrees expresses herself in the following way:

> *"I understand what the group wants to do, and although I don't agree, you've heard me out, and I can live with the decision."*

If someone strongly disagrees all of the way with the decision and there is no way to overcome the objections, then no action is taken on the decision. Essentially, one firm "no" vote in consensus decision-making can halt a decision (as opposed to majority rule).



Robbie Gordon

> "It is impossible, if no more than one opinion is uttered, to make a choice of the best . . . but if opposite speeches are delivered, then choice can be exercised. In like manner pure gold is not recognized by itself; but when we test it along with baser ore, we perceive which is better."
>
> — Herodotus

Steps to Developing Consensus

Developing consensus when decision-making or problem-solving includes a number of steps which facilitate the process.

STEP 1: Describe and define the problem, situation, or issue that needs a decision. Do this in a way that not only gives a clear idea of what decision needs to be made, but also why it needs to be made, and how it relates to the objectives of the group. Many times problems about which decisions need to be made are complex. In this case, it is very helpful to write the components on newsprint or a blackboard. And, in fact, complex issues should have information handed out prior to a meeting (ditto, etc.) and be listed on the agenda. (At CITP, we add to the agenda whether an item listed needs a decision or not, and how much time we anticipate it will take.)

Experience has shown that some members won't read the information until the meeting has started. It's unfair to others in the group to allow precious time to be spent in doing what should have been done before the meeting. The facilitator should express this to the group as a whole and not to specific individuals. It is important to collect and present all of the relevant information so that the problem can be clearly defined and understood by everyone. Many times decisions can be made at that point for minor issues. Yet, it helps if the group is prepared to postpone a decision for which not enough information is at hand. It is helpful to choose a specific individual to be responsible for gathering that information, and to have the recorder place it on the next agenda.

STEP 2: Brainstorm a list of all possible alternatives. Brainstorming means listing on newsprint or a blackboard all of the possible alternatives and ideas that can be generated by a group in a few minutes (without editing, discussion or rejection of any ideas). Ideas are listed by the facilitator and discussion of each is held till the group runs dry.

One way to prevent the more powerful or vocal members from dominating is to go around the meeting taking only one alternative or idea from each person. Then go around again and again until everyone feels comfortable with the brainstorm list. This technique, of course, depends on the size of the group. In the case of a large group, the process can be decentralized, and a great deal of time saved by breaking into smaller groups which bring their brainstorms together at the end.

This step is one of the most important in the process, for it allows for participation and creativity from the entire group. It prevents the group from locking in to the first motion or proposal presented, and in the longrun saves time by (a) not discussing the good and bad points of poor solutions and, (b) not making a poor decision without adequate information and input from the whole group. This would create little desire to carry out the decision and in many cases, the time would need to be spent making a new decision.

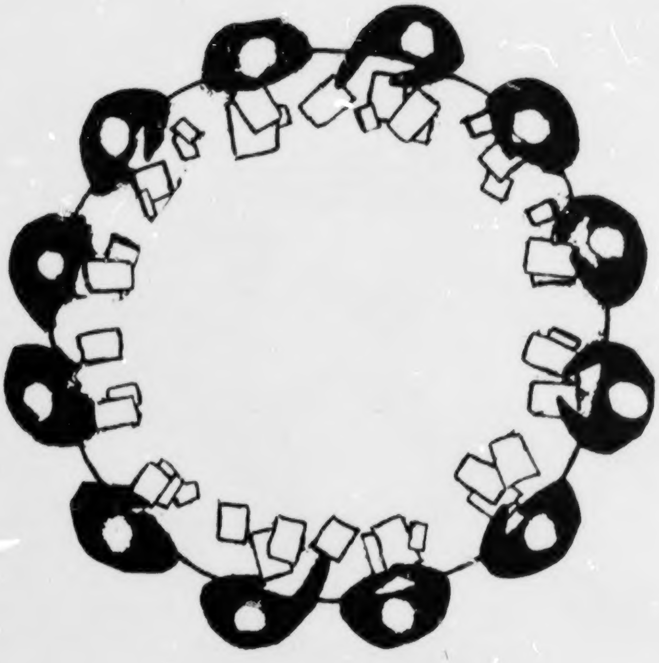
STEP 3: Review, change, consolidate, rewrite, and set priorities. Going through the brainstorm list, and consolidating and revising the ideas, the group will be able to come up with a few good solutions. There is usually a relationship between various items on the list, and a little rewording can make most people happy. It helps to prioritize—or at least select the top two or three that the group will deal with. This can be done by taking a "straw vote" where everyone gets to vote for his top three choices, and then listing the items in numerical order based on votes. This can save a good deal of time by setting aside solutions that no one supports (even if they suggested it). Or, it will make the group aware of the diversity between members.

In large groups, again, it may help to do this step in small groups, asking each group to return with the maximum of two to three solutions. When the whole group reconvenes, a tally can be made and the top solutions selected.

If, at this point, there is only one predominant solution, go on to the next step and make the decision.

If there is more than one solution strongly supported at this point, it would be helpful to repeat Step 2. One suggestion which might help at this point, that usually comes later, is to find out **who** will carry out the decision by **when**. This has many times eliminated a useful but impractical solution.

Bob Biagi



STEP 4: Make a decision by consensus. When a solution has been formulated, make sure that it is written so that everyone can see it (newsprint, blackboard) for the decision may still need a few alterations or final touches.

There may be members present who have not indicated any interest in the decision, and have been given ample opportunity to participate. You may want to go on with the decision, although in small groups, it helps to check out the reason for the lack of response.

After an adequate discussion—if this has not already occurred—the facilitator asks if there is any opposition to the decision. If there is no strong opposition to the decision, it can be adopted. Some more traditional groups may feel the need to vote at this point, but usually it's just a formality since everyone has participated in every part of the decision-making.

It is at this point where some groups will differ from others. The difference lies in the commitment to achieving consensus. Styles such as that used by the Clamshell Alliance emphasize the point that "the group takes **no** action that is not consented to by all members." It is extremely important for a group about to partake in a "nonviolent action" which may result in members being jailed, or worse, to know that everyone has been able to express themselves and have come to a personal agreement with the group decision.

In this case, any one person can state opposition and this will block the group's adoption of the decision. (There are ways to express an objection without blocking the group from adopting the decision, see **Guidelines and Hints.**)

Lionel Delevingne

If there is an objection blocking the decision, it must be worked out before the decision can be made. If the objection blocking consensus can be satisfied with the approval of the other members, and if there are no other objections, consensus will have been reached.

In some instances, all objections will not be satisfied. Then the group would continue to uphold the last consensus decision that relates to the problem. This will continue until the group can come up with a decision which is not blocked. If there is no prior decision which relates to the problem then the consensus is to take no action as a group.

In addition to the way mentioned earlier for objecting to a proposal without blocking consensus, the Clamshell adds these methods:

Non-support. ("I don't see the need for this, but I'll go along.")

Reservations. ("I think this may be a mistake, but I can live with it.")

Standing aside. ("I personally can't do this, but I won't block others from doing it.")

Withdrawing from the group.

STEP 5: Implementing the decision: who will do what by when and how? While making a collective decision in which everyone participates is a major part of consensus, it is a waste of energy without this step. Everything must be laid out now—after the decision has been made and before the people go home. This means the tasks must be clearly defined, the people who will do them clarified as well as the dates they will be done by and the way they shall use to accomplish it.

To do this, two copies of the following chart can be handed out for members to fill in their tasks, etc. One copy stays with the member for self-accountability and one goes to the facilitator so the information can be recorded and placed on future agendas.

At this point, it may help to review the decision a final time to see if in reality it is practical and whether members are committed to do what is listed on the chart.

STEP 6: Evaluate the results of the decision. Every major decision should be evaluated in order to set new direction, as well as for group accountability. *Did we do what we said we would do? What things happened that were not anticipated in the planning? How would we do it if we had to do it again?* This can be a simple or a complex matter for your group—as is the whole process. Modify everything to fit your situation.

Guidelines and Hints to Help in the Process of Consensus Decision-Making

1. **Modify the problem-solving/decision-making model to fit your own group,** its needs and the type or importance of the decision being made. Reserve the full process for complex and important issues and don't overburden members by breaking into subgroups to decide if wine or beer should be served at a banquet.

2. **Think about using committees** to gather and present the relevant information for a particular decision—it saves time.

3. **Attempt to satisfy objections.** In this process, there is a great deal of power invested in every member. That power must be used sparingly and in a responsible manner. Members should only use their blocking power for "serious, principled objection." It's better to find ways to satisfy objections than to block consensus.

4. **Beware of the time pressures**—plan ahead for enough time to develop consensus on vital decisions. Be willing to extend the time or postpone a decision till the next meeting.

5. **Be aware of members who have difficulty expressing their ideas,** and have facilitators help out. Especially be aware of members with linguistic and cultural differences and support them.

6. **Always be looking for the common ground** where members can begin to agree on something and work from there.

7. **Don't take the attitude that a meeting is a competitive event** where someone has to win and someone has to lose. When a stalemate occurs, look for the next most acceptable alternative and work from there.

8. **Avoid arguing for your point of view.** Present your views clearly and logically and then listen to what others have to say.

9. **Don't resort to conflict reducers,** such as bargaining, majority votes or flipping a coin. Work it out.

10. **Don't be afraid of differences.** It's natural for people to disagree and have differing points of view. In fact, try to encourage all sides of an issue to be expressed. The more information and input, the better the decision.

11. **Don't change your mind or withdraw an objection simply to stay away from conflict.** Beware of group conformity and the pressures for agreement and harmony. Watch out for an important decision which comes too easily—be sure everyone understands the implication of the decision in the same way.

12. **Irreconcilable differences can be worked out** if people talk freely and honestly and try to listen and understand all sides, including their own.

Summary:
Consensus Decision-Making

In summary, the steps in the process of consensus decision-making and problem-solving look like this:

1. Describe and define the problem, situation, or issue that needs a decision.

2. Brainstorm a list of all possible alternatives.

3. Review, change, consolidate, rewrite and set priorities.

4. Make a decision using consensus.

5. Implementing the decision: Who will do What by When and How.

6. Evaluate the results of the decision.

Using the consensus process, your group effort could result in a higher quality of decisions being made and carried through in the long run. It could maximize the participation of all members in the decision-making process and help to lessen the impact of "the leader" and "tyranny by the majority," as well as help to eliminate conflict, and get action from members on decisions **they** made.

Robbie Gordon

Chapter VIII:

How Others Have Seen It— Actual Responses to Exercises

Robbie Gordon

In order to give facilitators and group members an idea of what may be expected from a few of the exercises included in this unit, the following is a compilation of some newsprint lists generated during actual workshops run by CITP. A major point to re-emphasize is that the discussion and processing of any exercise is more important than the exercise itself. This also allows exercises to be used in almost any group, especially if group members make the exercise specifically relevant to its own situation.

These are the compiled brainstorm ideas from the Citizen Involvement Week workshop on Leadership-Membership in Holyoke, North Adams, Worcester, Gardner and Lowell, Massachusetts. The ideas and needs of over 50 groups are included with minimal editing so that you can get a feel for some of the common problems faced by groups across the state of Massachusetts. To make these notes more meaningful, read through the exercises throughout the unit while looking at these notes.

This is followed in part one by an actual process observation done using the methods described in this unit. This section has been edited, but glancing through this may give the process observer not only an example but a reason to feel that most groups have the same problem as your own, and that with a little bit of understanding and involvement in the group process exercises and discussion/processing things may very well improve.

Needs of the Group

(in random order)

1. Good, comfortable, motivated, ongoing give-and-take within the group.

2. Getting people talking about the hidden agenda.

3. Identifying common issues.

4. Establishing good rapport.

5. Getting and keeping members.

6. Stimulating and maintaining the interest level.

7. Dealing constructively with conflicts.

8. Getting everyone to work.

9. Recruiting members.

10. Obtaining qualified volunteers.

11. Maintaining cooperation within the group.

12. Maintaining communication and more contact.

13. Getting the organization to seek support from the community.

14. Working effectively as a unit/team.

15. Obtaining equal (same) level of openness.

16. Ending intimidation and alienation of newcomers.

17. Making everyone feel a part of the group.

18. Having an equal investment.

19. Minimizing the effects of status on trust.

20. Developing mutual trust and equal investment in clearly identified goals.

21. Learning how to keep personal prejudice from disrupting group process.

22. Learning how to keep people involved and attentive in meetings.

23. Learning how to allow for adequate thought and discussion before making decisions.

24. Learning how to generate alternatives before deciding on an action.

25. Learning how to make people feel "okay."

26. Learning how to cooperate.

27. Learning how to have less ego, more unity.

28. Learning how to get group satisfaction.

29. Getting people to feel responsive to group commitment.

30. Getting the group to be responsible to individual needs.

31. Learning how to motivate people in the community.

32. Learning how to promote better communication.

33. Learning how to help people to feel free to speak at any time.

34. Learning how to get people to inter-relate their problems.

> "The greatest remedy for anger is delay."
>
> — Seneca

What You Say and How You Say It

(a few typical answers)

TASK A—Examples of times you didn't disagree with what a person said to you, but you felt resentful or put down about what was said. What were the reasons?

1. I didn't like the person.
2. They were indirect, not forward.
3. I wasn't being understood.
4. They were too demanding.
5. They dictated to me.
6. I was told, not asked.
7. Sometimes the truth hurts.

TASK B—Have you ever strongly disagreed with someone, and come away having enjoyed it though you didn't **win**? What were the reasons?

1. I respected the other person.
2. I felt they had their right to their own opinion.
3. They respected themselves.
4. We were equals.
5. We cared for each other.
6. Mutual respect.
7. Trust.

Things that Block/Build a Group

THINGS THAT BLOCK A GROUP (BLOCKING)

1. Not listening.
2. Unclear issues.
3. Disorganized.
4. No facilitator.
5. No defined goals and objectives.
6. Not buying into goals and objectives.
7. Not being involved in decision-making.
8. Impatience with the group decision-making process.
9. Being afraid to speak up at a meeting because of what others might say.
10. Using words and jargon that some members might not understand.

THINGS THAT BUILD A GROUP (BUILDING)

1. Humor.
2. Starting on time.
3. Short meetings.
4. Fun.
5. Compromising.
6. Similar backgrounds.
7. Common goals.
8. Enthusiasm.
9. Cooperation.
10. Assigning a leadership role on a temporary basis (rotating facilitator).
11. "Be a little nasty nicely."

11. Lack of information.
12. Not listening to what others have to say.
13. Suppressing conflict.
14. Rejecting other's ideas without hearing them out.
15. Animosity and dislikes in the group.
16. Lack of multi-lingual communication.
17. Time pressures.
18. Outside pressures.
19. Using **Robert's Rules.**
20. Ego.
21. Pushy people.
22. Hidden agenda/self-interest.
23. Lack of well-defined roles.
24. False humor or too much humor.
25. Inflexible group structure.
26. Self-interest.
27. Lack of planning.
28. No prepared agenda.
29. Age group differences.

12. Taking an extreme absurd position to help others realize where they stand.
13. Having clear goals/understood by all.
14. Alternative ideas.
15. Consensus decision-making.
16. Respect.
17. Defined roles.
18. Commitment.
19. Flexible structuring.
20. Support from others.
21. Facilitation rather than leadership.
22. Initiative.
23. Cooperation.
24. Sensitivity to people's differing needs.
25. Trust.
26. Being process-oriented not task-oriented.
27. Listening.
28. Follow through/and accepting responsibility.
29. Dealing with the affects of power differences on group process.

A Few Short Notes from an Actual Process Observation

(The original observation contained 82 points.)

1. The positioning of people was distinctly divided. Numbers three and 10 were the axis powers. Age appeared to be a clear division, as well as personal life styles. The whole arrangement was not conducive to having an effective meeting. Basically, the table was much too long. People couldn't see each other. (The people in the rear had to stretch to get involved.)

5. The facilitator was standing too much. This took responsibility away from members—they like getting off easy.

9. Half the group was either taking notes or appearing to be inattentive.

10. Members usually addressed the chairperson and not the group.

14. Person number one diverted the group from the topic at hand and led the group into a low energy period.

22. Setting a time limit is important. The agenda could have had the times set more realistically —not just a half hour for each item.

23. Some questions I would ask you are:
    a. How do you make a decision?
    b. How does someone get to say no?

26. Interesting near/far table sitting dynamics.
    a. The group is divided by age and life style.
    b. The power axis is still between three and 10.
    c. Chairperson talks (physically) over the heads of the front group (the inside group).
    d. The shape and size of the table again forces those in the rear to sit forward but they showed more interest (nonverbally) in what was happening.

35. The chairperson keyed to number 15 because she showed interest in what he was saying. This led to change in influence.

40. The agenda was too much of the chairperson's possession. The chair kept offering "my opinion." By 8:25 the group was drained—only one person responded to a question by the chair.

45. The chair seemed to be throwing a ball about the table but no one caught it—it just bounced off their heads.

48. Member 13, the new member, said "I thought this meeting was to orient new members," and no one addressed the issue. Instead number 10 changed the topic. Luckily, at that point the chair brought things back again.

52. The chair asked for further comments but talked of moving on so the stage was set for no comments.

61. Timekeeping: rather than saying "let's keep it short," they might ask if more time were needed and how much the group was willing to spend on the topic.

62. By 8:50 the influence was back to six, 10 and three.

67. The show of hands did help and felt good to the group but there was still little contribution from the lower end of the table.

70. The break was the information time for new members as well as sharing information and phone numbers among the older members. It appeared that things were said during the break that should have been said in the meeting. It was very important and useful to have a break.

75. It was very good the way the chair kept the meeting moving and brought people back to the tasks. People near the observer commented very positively.

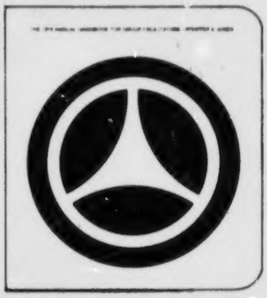
Chapter IX:

Resources

The Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators

Volumes 1972-1977
J.W. Pfeiffer, and J.E. Jones, editors,
University Associates,
La Jolla, CA

The Annuals contain structured experiences, instruments, lecturettes, papers, book reviews, and other resources for the group facilitator. Useful but expensive.



Behavior in Organizations

L.W. Porter, E.E. Lawler, and J. Richard Harkman
McGraw-Hill, 1975

Chs. 15-17 are a good introduction for a novice trainer.

Current Perspectives in Organizational Development,

J. Jennings Partin,
Addison-Wesley, 1973
Reading, MA

A book of readings which describe in detail how organizational development has and has not worked in government, industry, mental health agencies, etc. Includes instruments and workshop designs.

Dynamics of Groups at Work

Herbert A. Thelen
University of Chicago Press, 1954

This is a classic book that anyone can read, and includes discussion of issues in group membership and process.

Dynamics of Planned Change

J. Watson Lippitt and B. Wesley
Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958

Deals with group dynamics and its relationship to community conflicts in the area of social change. Good reading for people involved in social change.

Experiences in Interpersonal Communication

Theodore Grove
Prentice-Hall, 1976

Sections deal with improving group communication, including activities which are useful in changing communication behavior.

Group Leadership

Neely D. Gardner
National Training and Development Service
Washington, D.C., 1974

Covers group values, motivations, leadership-membership and communication. Includes methods to improve group leadership and a good bibliography.

Group Methods To Actualize Human Potential: A Handbook

H.A. Otto
Holistic Press
Beverley Hills, 1970

A collection of papers dealing with human potential and its interrelationship with institutional structures.

Group Processes, An Introduction to Group Dynamics, 2nd ed.

Joseph Luft
National Press Books
Palo Alto, CA

Short, basic discussion of important issues in group dynamics.

Group Techniques for Program Planning

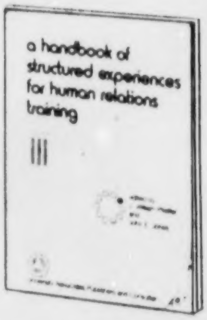
Andre Delbecq, Andrew Van de Ven, David Gustafson
Scott-Foresman, 1975

Deals with thinking in groups.

Guidelines for Reaching Consensus

Jay Hall
Psychology Today
Nov., 1971

A useful addition to the literature on consensus decision making.



a handbook of structured experiences for human relations training
III

A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training , Volumes I-VI.

J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones, Editors
University Associates
San Diego, CA, 1977

A six volume set of structured experiences in workbook form. An excellent reference/resource for exercises dealing with a multitude of issues in group process.

Handbook of Staff Development and Human Relations Training: Materials Developed for Use in Africa

Donald Nylen, Robert J. Mitchell, and Anthony Stout,
NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science
Washington, D.C., 1967

Explains the nature of staff development and the need for human relations training. Also has ideas for intergroup activities.

How To Make Meetings Work: A New Interaction Method

Michael Doyle and David Straus
NTL Learning Resources Corporation
La Jolla, CA

A how-to book that covers communication, group dynamics, organizational behavior and outlines a step-by-step strategy for eliminating ineffective meetings.

Human Resource Development in OD.

Malcolm S. Knowles
Public Administration Review, Vol. 34, No. 2

In a short article Knowles lays out his assumptions dealing with how adults learn.

Instrumentation in Human Relations Training: A Guide to 75 Instruments with Wide Application to the Behavioral Sciences.

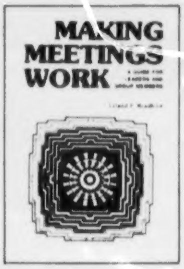
J.W. Pfeiffer, and R. Heslin
University Associates, 1973

A guide for practitioners of human relations training. It explores a number of instruments useful in the training setting and describes why they can be used and how to get useful feedback.

Leadership and Social Change

William R. Lassey, editor

A resource and textbook for persons engaged in leadership development and managerial training. Selections on aspects of change and communications in leadership from well known authors in the field.



Making Meetings Work: A Guide for Leaders and Group Members

Leland P. Bradford
University Associates
La Jolla, CA

Written for anyone who leads groups and conducts meetings. Illustrates the approach that encourages the active participation of group members.

> "You don't have a team until everyone's heard."
>
> — Arturo Toscanini

Managing With People

Jack K. Fordyce and Raymond Weil
Addison-Wesley
Reading MA, 1971

Using a practical and logical approach, this hand book details procedures which can implement change within organizations with the participation of its members.

A Manual for Group Facilitators

The Center for Conflict Resolution
Madison, WI

Includes exercises and reading lists for further study. Highly recommended for those who wish an in-depth understanding of facilitating.

Manual for Small Meetings: Techniques to Make Small Meetings Produce Results

Brill Communications
Philadelphia, PA, 1975

A compendium of ideas, techniques and procedures to help create and direct small meetings that are productive.

Motivation and Personality

A.H. Maslow
Harper and Brothers
New York, NY, 1954

This is a classic work in the field of motivation. The "Needs Pyramid" in this manual was adapted from Maslow.

Meetings That Get Results

Donald R. Fessler
Community Leader Training Associates, Inc.
Blacksburg, VA, 1971

A clear guide which includes factors to consider when planning a meeting, various methods of achieving audience involvement, how to facilitate a discussion and brainstorming.

National Training and Development Service Training Series

Washington, DC

- *Organization Development and Change*
  John D. Adams
- *Building a Learning Community*
  David A. Kolb
- *Training for Action Research*
  Michael E. McGill
- *Management by Objectives for Public Administrators*
  Jim L. Tarter
- *Group Leadership*
  Neely D. Gardner

Includes a number of short, theoretical statements and training designs on a range of subjects associated with organizational development.

A New Look at Parliamentary Procedure

North Central Regional Extension Publication No. 48
Sheldon G. Lowry and John S. Holik
Cooperative Extension Service

This is an excellent publication which presents a very concise, simplified form of group decision making. Highly recommended for groups who now use parliamentary procedure.

No Bosses Here: A Manual on Working Collectively

Vocations for Social Change
Cambridge, MA, 1974

A guide for people who are working in a collective or are thinking about starting one. It provides models and ideas for everyone involved in the struggle for a more human work world.

Organization Development: Behavioral Science Interventions for Organization Development

Wendell L. French and Cecil H. Bell, Jr.
Prentice Hall
Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1973

This book covers the field with a definition, history, basic components, characteristics, assumptions and a few case studies to indicate how it works.

Organization Development Series

Addison-Wesley
Reading, MA

- *Organization Development Strategies and Models, 1969*
  Richard Beckhard
- *Organization Development, Its Nature, Origins and Prospects, 1969*
  Warren Bennis
- *Building a Dynamic Organization Through Grid Organization Development, 1969*
  Robert Blake and Jane S. Mouton
- *Designing Complex Organizations, 1973*
  Jay Galbraith
- *Developing Organizations: Diagnosis and Action, 1969*
  Paul Lawrence and Jay Lorsch
- *The Organization in a Changing Environment, 1973*
  Richard Roeber
- *Process Consultation: Its Role in Organization Development, 1969*
  Edgar H. Schein
- *Physical Settings and Organization Development, 1973*
  Fred Steele
- *Interpersonal Peacemaking: Confrontations and Third Party Consultations, 1969.*
  Richard Walton

This series is an excellent view of organizational development from the perspective of a number of well known authorities in the field.

> "It was government by discussion that broke the bond of ages and set free the originality of mankind."
>
> — Walter Bagehot, quoted by Adlai Stevenson, Harpers, 1956.

Organization Development, Sources and Applications

Kenneth L. Murrell, and Peter B. Vaill
American Society for Training and Development
Washington, DC, 1975

The Planning of Change

W.G. Bennis, K.D. Benne, and R. Chin
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977

Organizational development blossomed in the 60s and this collection of statements and tools of the trade known at that time no doubt gave impetus to the movement. Over 600 pages of heavy reading.

Resource Manual for a Living Revolution: Alias, the Monster Manual

Virginia Coover, Ellen Deacon, Charles Esser, and Christopher Moore
Movement for a New Society Press
Philadelphia, PA, 1977

This manual ranks among the top ten. 150 pages of the text relates directly to the material covered here and the rest would be interesting and useful for anyone interested in social change.

The Seed Catalogue

J. Schrank
Beacon Press
Boston, MA, 1974

A guide to teaching/learning materials, this resource identifies many people, groups, books, films, records, games and devices that can aid groups.

The Silent Language

Edward Hall
Fawcett Premier Press, 1959

A study of nonverbal forms of communication and cultural differences as expressed by nonverbal cues. Focuses on the cultural aspects of "body language."

Simulation Games: Designs and Implementations

R. Maidment and R. Bronstein
Charles E. Merrill Press
Columbus, OH, 1973

A useful and informative book from which it is easy to adapt things for different groups.

The Small Meeting Planner

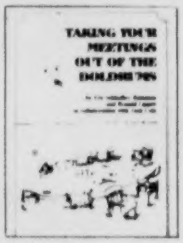
L. This
Gulf Press
Houston, TX, 1972

Designed for those who plan meetings for less than a hundred participants. Contains everything from physical arrangements to methods of evaluation.

The Social Technology of Organization Development

W.W. Burke and H.A. Hornstein, editors
NTL Learning Resources Corporation
Fairfax, VA, 1972

Defines organizational development; its articles reflect much of the literature in the field.



Taking Your Meetings Out of the Doldrums

Eva Schindler-Rainman and Ronald Lippitt in collaboration with Jack Cole
University Associates, Inc.
La Jolla, CA, 1977

This innovative booklet offers practical guidelines and tools for planning and conducting successful meetings.

Team Development Trainers' Workshop

Public Administration Review
Vol. 34, No. 2, 1974

Team development, team building; deals with what it is, how to do it and how to teach others to do it.

Techniques for Organizational Effectiveness

Claire Fulcher and Mary Gref
American Association of University Women
Washington, DC

An excellent book rated in the top ten, which would be useful for any group. Designed to assist in building a cohesive group and increasing group decision making skills.

Tool Catalog: Techniques and Strategies for Successful Action Programs

American Association of University Women
Washington, DC, 1976

Provides step-by-step processes for carrying out various techniques using low budgets and volunteers.

A Trainer's Guide to Andragogy

John Ingalls
Department of Health, Education and Welfare
Social and Rehabilitation Service
Washington, DC, 1972

Covers the theory, and makes the tie between education and organizational development; explains the role of the trainer and gives an organizational model.

Twenty Exercises for Trainers

NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science
Washington, DC, 1972

The Volunteer Community: Creative Use of Human Resources

University Associates
La Jolla, CA, 1975

Two chapters in this book may be of particular interest to meeting planners. The Training of Trainers section deals with how to help trainers learn and contains an illustrative trainership meeting design.

A do-it-yourself manual that deals with the first steps in group development for members of citizen boards and grass roots organizations.

It includes:

- useful tools and exercises written in simple language
- step-by-step instruction
- a "translation" of existing group process literature into plain language
- suggestions for overcoming communication blocks
- information on how to facilitate a group
- guidelines for observing your own group's process
- actual responses from other groups

Bob Biagi—began his involvement with community, labor and political groups in the early 60s. His political activities, combined with his years as a high school teacher, coach and organizer in the teacher movement in Paterson, N.J., have helped to develop his awareness and understanding of group process and facilitating, as well as given him a grounding in practical experience.

Bob's background includes teaching history at Wayne State University, where he earned an M.A. degree working in immigration and labor history. Bob's background as a cultural anthropologist (he is a Ph.D candidate in Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst) brings a wider cross-cultural perspective which is refreshing and very useful for community groups. He spent more than a year doing fieldwork in North-Central Italy where he lived and worked with rural villagers and urbanites. His research dealt with the economic and social aspects of rural/urban migration and the ways in which family relationships are affected by ties to migrated kin. His observation skills, developed as an anthropologist, have proven valuable in working with citizen groups doing process observation, a topic covered in this manual.